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Fred Leemhuis, 'Origins and Early Development of the *Tafsīr* Tradition', in Andrew Rippin (ed.), *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an* (Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 13–30.

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Walid A. Saleh, 'Preliminary Remarks on the Historiography of *tafsīr* in Arabic: A History of the Book Approach', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 2010, 12, 6–40.

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1967	Nabia Abbott	Studies in Arabic literary papyri II: Qur'anic commentary and tradition. Document 1	<i>Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri II: Qur'anic Commentary and Tradition</i> , University of Chicago Press, pp. 92–106.	III	41
1970	John Wansbrough	<i>Majāz al-Qur'ān</i> : periphrastic exegesis	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> , 33, 247–66.	II	16
1981	J. Jomier	The Qur'anic commentary of Imām Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: its sources and its originality	International Congress for the Study of the Qur'an, Australian National University, Canberra, 8–13 May 1981, Australian National University, pp. 93–111.	III	53
1981	Azim Nanji	Shi'ī Ismā'īlī interpretations of the Qur'an	International Congress for the Study of the Qur'an, Australian National University, Canberra, 8–13 May 1981, Australian National University, pp. 39–49.	III	48
1981	Muhammad Abul Quasem	Al-Ghazali's theory of Qur'an exegesis according to one's personal opinion	International Congress for the Study of the Qur'an, Australian National University, Canberra, 8–13 May 1981, Australian National University, pp. 69–91.	II	23
1984	Andrew Rippin	Al-Zuhri, <i>Naskh al-Qur'ān</i> and the problem of early <i>tafsīr</i> texts	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> , 47:1, 22–43.	I	11
1985	Hartmut Bobzin	Notes on the importance of variant readings and grammar in the <i>Tafsīr al-Ġalālayn</i>	<i>ZAL</i> , 15, 33–44.	II	27
1988	Yeshayahu Goldfeld	The development of theory on Qur'anic exegesis in Islamic scholarship	<i>Studia Islamica</i> , 67, 5–27.	II	38

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1988	Jane Dammen McAuliffe	Qurānic hermeneutics: the views of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr	Andrew Rippin (ed.), <i>Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an</i> , Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 46–62.	II	22
1988	Jane Dammen McAuliffe	Ibn al-Jawzī's exegetical propaedeutic: introduction and translation (of the muqaddimah to <i>Zād al-masār fī 'ilm al-tafsīr</i>)	<i>Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics</i> , 8, 101–13.	II	36
1988	David S. Powers	The exegetical genre <i>nāsikh al-Qur'ān wa mansūkhuhu</i>	Andrew Rippin (ed.), <i>Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an</i> , Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 117–38.	II	33
1988	Andrew Rippin	The function of <i>asbāb al-nuzūl</i> in Qur'ānic exegesis	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> , 51:1, 1–20.	II	32
1989	Peter Heath	Creative hermeneutics: a comparative analysis of three Islamic approaches	<i>Arabica</i> , 36, 173–210.	II	40
1990	Uri Rubin	Meccan trade and Qur'ānic exegesis (Qur'ān 2: 198)	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> , 53:3, 421–8.	IV	67
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1992	Wolffhart Heinrichs	Contacts between scriptural hermeneutics and literary theory in Islam: the case of <i>majāz</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften</i> , 7, 253–84.	II	17
1993	Norman Calder	<i>Tafsīr</i> from Ṭabarī to Ibn Kathīr: problems in the description of a genre, illustrated with reference to the story of Abraham	G. Hawting and A. Sharif (eds), <i>Approaches to the Qur'ān</i> , London: Routledge, pp. 101–40.	III	46
1993	Farid Esack	Qur'anic hermeneutics: problems and prospects	<i>Muslim World</i> , 83:2, 118–41.	IV	77
1993	Nicholas Heer	Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī's esoteric exegesis of the Koran	Leonard Lewisohn (ed.), <i>The Heritage of Sufism</i> , Vol. I, London: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications; rp. Oxford: Oneworld, 1999, pp. 235–57.	III	56
1994	Andrew Rippin	<i>Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās</i> and criteria for dating early <i>tafsīr</i> texts	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i> , 18, 38–83.	I	12
1995	Andrew Rippin	Studying early <i>tafsīr</i> texts	<i>Miszellen: Der Islam</i> , 310–23.	I	10
1996	Gerhard Böwering	The major sources of Sulamī's minor Qur'ān commentary	<i>Oriens</i> , 35, 35–56.	III	54
1996	Kees Versteegh	The linguistic introduction to Rāzī's <i>Tafsīr</i>	Petr Vavrousek and Petr Zemanek (eds), <i>Studies on Near East Languages and Literatures</i> , Prague: Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, BCS Printing, pp. 589–603.	II	26
1997	Dimitry Frolow	Ibn al-Nadīm on the history of Qur'anic exegesis	<i>Wiener Zeitschrift fuer die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i> , 87, 65–81.	I	3
1997	Anthony H. Johns	Solomon and the horses: the theology and exegesis of a Koranic story, sura 38 (<i>Ṣād</i>): 30–33	<i>Institut Dominican d'Etudes Orientales du Caire: Melanges</i> , 23, 259–82.	IV	62

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1998	Thomas E. Burman	<i>Tafsīr</i> and translation: traditional Arabic Qur'ān exegesis and the Latin Qur'āns of Robert of Ketton and mark of Toledo	<i>Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies</i> , 73:3, 703–32.	IV	74
1998	B. T. Lawson	Qur'ān commentary as sacred performance: the Bāb's <i>tafsīrs</i> of Qur'ān 103 and 108, the declining day and the abundance	Johann-Christoph Burgel and Isabel Schayani (eds), <i>Der Iran um 19 Jahrhundert und die Entstehung der Baha'i Religion</i> , Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, pp. 145–58.	III	61
1998	Jane Dammen McAuliffe	Assessing the <i>isrā'iliyyāt</i> : an exegetical conundrum	S. Leder (ed.), <i>Story-telling in the Framework of Non-fictional Arabic Literature</i> , Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 345–69.	II	28
1998	Jane Dammen McAuliffe	Ibn Taymiya Treatise on the Principles of Tafsīr	John Renard (ed.), <i>Windows on the House of Islam: Muslim Sources on Spirituality and Religious Life</i> , Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 35–43.	II	35
1998	Brannon M. Wheeler	Moses or Alexander? Early Islamic exegesis of Qur'ān 18:60–65	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i> , 57:3, 191–215.	IV	70
1999	Claude Gilliot	The beginnings of Qur'ānic exegesis	Andrew Rippin (ed.), <i>The Qur'ān: Formative Interpretation</i> , Aldershot: Variorum, pp. 1–27.	I	7
1999	Manfred Götz	Māturīdī and his <i>Kitāb ta'wīlāt al-Qur'ān</i>	Andrew Rippin (ed.), <i>Qur'ān: Formative Interpretation</i> , Aldershot: Aldgate, pp. 181–214. This is a translation of Manfred Götz, 'Maturīdī und sein <i>Kitāb ta'wīlāt al-Qur'ān</i> ', <i>Der Islam</i> , 41 (1965), 27–70.	III	52

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1999	Jane Dammen McAuliffe	Christians in the Qur'ān and <i>tafsīr</i>	J. Waardenburg (ed.), <i>Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey</i> , New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 105–21.	IV	73
1999	E. A. Rezvan	The Qur'ān and its world. IX. The triumph of diversity: Muslim exegesis	<i>Manuscripta Orientalia</i> , 5:2, 37–57.	I	5
1999	Roberto Tottoli	Origin and use of the term <i>isrā'īliyyāt</i> in Muslim literature	<i>Arabica</i> , 46:2, 193–210.	II	29
1999	Kees Versteegh	Zayd ibn 'Alī's commentary on the Qur'ān	Y. Suleiman (ed.), <i>Arabic Grammar and Linguistics</i> , London: Curzon, pp. 9–29.	I	9
2000	Mahmoud M. Ayoub	Literary exegesis of the Qur'ān: the case of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī	Issa J. Boullata (ed.), <i>Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'an</i> , London: Curzon, pp. 292–309.	IV	64
2000	Meir M. Bar-Asher	The Qur'ān commentary ascribed to Imam Ḥasan al-'Askarī	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i> , 24, 358–79.	III	47
2000	Jane Dammen McAuliffe	Text and textuality: Q. 3:7 as a point of intersection	I. J. Boullata (ed.), <i>Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'an</i> , London: Curzon Press, pp. 56–76.	II	21
2001	Gerhard Böwering	The light verse: Qur'ānic text and Ṣūfī interpretation	<i>Oriens</i> , 36, 113–44.	IV	69
2001–6	Claude Gilliot	Exegesis of the Qur'ān: classical and medieval	J. McAuliffe (ed.), <i>Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an</i> , Vol. II, Leiden: E. J. Brill, pp. 99–124.	I	1
2003	Andrew Rippin	The designation of “foreign” languages in the exegesis of the Qur'ān	Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Barry D. Walfish and Joseph W. Goering (eds), <i>With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam</i> , Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 437–43.	II	31
2003	Kristin Zahra Sands	On the popularity of Husayn Va'iz-i Khashafī's <i>Mavālib-i 'aliyya</i> : a Persian commentary on the Qur'ān	<i>Iranian Studies</i> , 36:4, 469–83.	III	49

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Date	Author	Title	Source	Vol.	Chap.
2003	Stefan Wild	The self-referentiality of the Qur'ān: sura 3:7 as an exegetical challenge	Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Barry D. Walfish and Joseph W. Goering (eds), <i>With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam</i> , Oxford University Press, pp. 422–36.	IV	68
2004	Herbert Berg	Ibn 'Abbās in 'Abbasid-Era <i>tafsīr</i>	James Montgomery (ed.), <i>Occasional Papers of the School of 'Abbasid Studies, Cambridge 6–10 July 2002. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</i> , Paris: Peeters, pp. 129–46.	I	14
2004	Jules Janssens	Avicenna and the Qur'ān: a survey of his Qur'ānic commentaries	<i>Mélanges de l'Institut Dominicain d'études orientales</i> , 25–6, 177–92.	III	60
2005	Haggai Ben-Shammai	The status of parable and simile in the Qur'ān and early <i>tafsīr</i> : polemic, exegetical and theological aspects	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i> , 30, 154–69.	II	18
2005	Toby Mayer	Shahrastānī on the arcana of the Qur'ān: a preliminary evaluation	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 7:2, 61–100.	IV	65
2005	Mohammed Rustum	Forms of gnosis in Sulamī's Sufi exegesis of the <i>Fātiḥa</i>	<i>Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations</i> , 16:4, 327–44.	IV	71
2006	Bruce Fudge	Qur'ānic exegesis in medieval Islam and modern orientalism	<i>Die Welt des Islams</i> , 46:2, 115–47.	I	4
2006	Annabel Keeler	Šūfī <i>tafsīr</i> as a mirror: al-Qushayrī the <i>murshid</i> in his <i>Laṭā'if al-ishārāt</i>	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 8:1, 1–21.	III	57
2006	Harald Motzki	Dating the so-called <i>Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās</i> : some additional remarks	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i> , 31, 147–63.	I	13
2006	Sajjad H. Rizvi	The existential breath of <i>al-raḥmān</i> and the munificent grace of <i>al-raḥīm</i> : the <i>Tafsīr Sūrat al-Fātiḥa</i> of Jāmī and the school of Ibn 'Arabī	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 8:1, 58–87.	III	58

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2006	Walid A. Saleh	The last of the Nishapuri school of <i>tafsīr</i> : al-Wāḥidī (d. 468/1076) and his significance in the history of Qur'anic exegesis	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i> , 126:2, 223–43.	III	45
2007	Jules Janssens	Al-Kindī: the founder of philosophical exegesis of the Qur'an	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 9:2, 1–21.	III	59
2007	Gordon Nickel	Early Muslim accusations of <i>tahrīf</i> : Muqātil ibn Sulaymān's commentary on key Qur'anic verses	David Thomas (ed.), <i>The Bible in Arab Christianity</i> , Leiden: Brill, pp. 207–23.	IV	72
2007	Gregor Schwarb	Capturing the meanings of God's speech: the relevance of <i>uṣūl al-fiqh</i> to an understanding of <i>uṣūl al-tafsīr</i> in Jewish and Muslim <i>kalām</i>	M. M. Bar-Asher et al. (eds), <i>A Word Fitly Spoken: Studies in Mediaeval Exegesis of the Hebrew Bible and the Qur'an Presented to Hagga Ben-Shammai</i> , Jerusalem, pp. 111–56.	II	39
2008	Mehmet Akif Koç	A comparison of the references to Muqātil b. Sulaymān (150/767) in the exegesis of al-Tha'labī (427/1036) with Muqātil's own exegesis	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i> , 53:1, 69–101.	III	42
2008	Ulrika Mårtensson	“The persuasive proof”: a study of Aristotle's politics and rhetoric in the Qur'ān and in al-Ṭabarī's commentary	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i> , 34, 363–420.	III	44
2008	Andrew Rippin	The Muslim Samson: medieval, modern and scholarly interpretations	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> , 71:2, 239–53.	IV	63
2008	Abdullah Saeed	Some reflections on the Contextualist approach to ethical texts of the Quran	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> , 71:2, 221–37.	IV	78
2008	Walid A. Saleh	A fifteenth-century Muslim Hebraist: al-Biqā'ī and his defense of using the Bible to interpret the Qur'ān	<i>Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies</i> , 83:3, 629–54.	II	30

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Date	Author	Title	Source	Vol.	Chap.
2009	Massimo Campanini	Qur'anic hermeneutics and political hegemony: Reformation of Islamic Thought	<i>Muslim World</i> , 99:1, 124–33.	IV	80
2009	Ulrika Mårtensson	Through the lens of modern hermeneutics: authorial intention in al-Ṭabarī's and al-Ghazālī's interpretation of Q. 24:35	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 11, 20–48.	II	25
2009	Robert G. Morrison	Discussions of astrology in early Tafsīr	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 11:2, 49–71.	IV	75
2009	Erik Ohlander	Modern Qur'anic hermeneutics	<i>Religion Compass</i> , 3:4, 620–36.	IV	79
2010	Jamal J. Elias	Šūfī <i>tafsīr</i> reconsidered: exploring the development of a genre	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 12, 41–55.	III	55
2010	Harald Motzki	The origins of Muslim exegesis: a debate	Harald Motzki with Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort and Sean Anthony, <i>Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghazi Hadith</i> , Leiden: E. J. Brill, pp. 231–303.	I	15
2010	Suleiman A. Mourad	The survival of the Mu'tazila tradition of Qur'anic exegesis in Shī'ī and Sunnī <i>tafsīr</i>	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 12, 83–108.	III	50
2010	Johanna Pink	Tradition, authority and innovation in contemporary Sunnī <i>tafsīr</i> : towards a typology of Qur'an commentaries from the Arab world, Indonesia and Turkey	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 12, 56–82.	IV	81

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2010	Walid A. Saleh	Preliminary remarks on the historiography of <i>tafsīr</i> in Arabic: a history of the book approach	<i>Journal of Qur'anic Studies</i> , 12, 6–40.	I	6
2011	Karen Bauer	“I have seen the people’s antipathy to this knowledge”: the Muslim exegete and his audience, 5th/11th–7th/13th centuries	Asad Q. Ahmed, Behnam Sadeghi and Michael Bonner (eds), <i>The Islamic Scholarly Tradition: Studies in History, Law, and Thought in Honor of Professor Michael Allan Cook</i> , Leiden: Brill, pp. 293–314.	IV	76
2011	Kees Versteegh	The name of the ant and the call to holy war: al-Dahhāk b. Muzāhim’s commentary on the Qur’ān	Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, Kees Versteegh and Joas Wagemakers (eds), <i>The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam. Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki</i> , Leiden: Brill, pp. 279–99.	III	43
2012	Andrew J. Lane	You can’t tell a book by its author: a study of Mu’tazilite theology in al-Zamakhsharī’s (d. 538/1144) <i>Kashshāf</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> , 75:1, 47–86.	IV	66
2012	Suleiman A. Mourad	The revealed text and the intended subtext: notes on the hermeneutics of the Qur’ān in Mu’tazila discourse as reflected in the <i>Tahqīq</i> of al-Hākīm al-Ghūmī (d. 494/1101)	Felicitas Opwis and David Reisman (eds), <i>Islamic Philosophy, Science, Culture, and Religion: Studies in Honor of Dimitri Gutas</i> , Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, pp. 367–95.	II	34
2012	Suleiman A. Mourad	The Mu’tazila and their <i>tafsīr</i> tradition: a comparative study of five exegetical glosses on Qur’ān 3.178	Part of a research paper from a monograph to be published by S. A. Mourad which studies the work of al-Jishumī, pp. 1–21.	III	51
2012	Mesut Okumuş	The influence of Ibn Sīnā on al-Ghazzālī in Qur’anic hermeneutics	<i>Muslim World</i> , 102:2, 390–411.	II	24

UNCORRECTED PROOFS

INTRODUCTION

Given the pre-eminent status of the Qur'ān as the principal scriptural source of Islam, the scholarship associated with its formal and traditional interpretation, commonly referred to as the discipline of *tafsīr*, has unsurprisingly occupied a revered place among the medieval sciences of Islam.¹ Commanding both authority and influence throughout its rich history, such was the vigour and sophistication with which the genre of *tafsīr* developed that by the end of the third/ninth century not only had voluminous commentaries and individualized texts appeared devoted to all aspects of the interpretation of the Qur'ān, but also treatises and tracts were composed which defined elaborate concepts and theories for the broaching of Qur'ānic exegesis.² Historically, notwithstanding the fact that the practice of *tafsīr* originally occurred within a variety of applied contexts across a range of subjects, normative exegetical analyses of the Qur'ān soon crystallized in the late second/eighth century and these were delicately configured around the selective paraphrastic and periphrastic treatment of consecutive segments of the Qur'ānic text. The former focused on supplying straightforward lexical equivalents and basic commentary for selected items of the Qur'ān's vocabulary, while the latter was constellated around a synthesis of discussions of selected Qur'ānic verses, adducing dicta sourced from a traditional hierarchy of exegetical authorities.³ Employing a discrete range of analytical devices, such treatments aimed at providing a dramatic gauging of the language, narrative, and exempla of the Qur'ān, underpinning its venerated status as the primary scriptural source of the faith.⁴

Over successive centuries, the countenance of the literature of exegesis became impressively wide-ranging, offering discrete treatments of legal, theological, rhetorical, linguistic, narrative, mystical, philosophical, and even scientific topics. Additionally, encompassed under the umbrella of *tafsīr* scholarship was a variegated span of specialized treatises, ranging from texts devoted to the incidence of abrogation in the Qur'ān and occasions of revelation, to disquisitions on the subject of the Qur'ān's inimitability, elements of which were meticulously subsumed within the more comprehensive exegetical treatments of the text. Despite the diversity of the historical periods, intellectual environments, and geographical regions in which exegetical commentaries and treatises were being produced, they all shared in a common heritage of erudition bequeathed by exegetes associated with the formative

years of Islam's development. That such activity was taking place in the early tradition was an evident indication of the increasing distinctiveness with which the faith of Islam was defined in the first centuries of its appearance and a reflection of the intellectual maturity of the traditions of learning through which its teachings and doctrines were being preserved, refined, and promulgated. The odyssey undertaken by the formal discipline of *tafsīr* had been quite remarkable: from a rudimentary tradition of learning initially proffering exegetical musings for the purposes of clarification, edification, and instruction, to a discipline boasting an impressive repertoire of theoretical models and frameworks for appreciating not only the various dimensions of the meaning of the sacred word, but also engaging with aspects of their import within new contexts and circumstances, through inspired processes of discovery and retrieval. With its synergy of ideas and approaches, the science of *tafsīr* sealed its place among the classical traditions of Islamic thought, historically furnishing in the process a unique platform for the expression of faith, ideology, and doctrine, and one whose importance remains relevant to the present.

Given the significance of *tafsīr* as one of the classical Islamic sciences, modern academic scholarship has understandably devoted considerable attention to the discipline. The lives and works of the great Qur'ān commentators have been the subject of detailed scrutiny and analysis; likewise, the historical evolution of the very methods and techniques devised and applied for the interpretation of the text has been carefully charted. Significantly, the literary endeavours of the Qur'ān commentators serve as a valuable repository of ideas and attitudes spanning crucial historical periods of the Islamic tradition; and, within the framework of the debate over Islamic origins and the authenticity of the early Islamic sources, the literature of early *tafsīr* together with the issue of its historical provenance has been hugely influential in shaping the various arguments and discussions. Within the discourses of religious reform and modernity, the wider implications of approaches to issues of scriptural interpretation predominate, adding to the significance of the genre of *tafsīr* both in the context of history, given the role it played in the elucidation of and contextualisation of the scripture sources of Islam, and in terms of modern developments and the quest to articulate novel ways of reading and engaging with these sources.⁵ Popular interest in the materials of *tafsīr* confirms the importance the sacred text and its interpretation presently command. In the Islamic world for centuries the transmission of knowledge was achieved through a traditional lecture system, using oral and written media coordinated through an intricate schema of licences and permissions which governed the reproduction of manuscripts and the dissemination of teachings, with many of the published texts and treatises now in our possession passing through this traditional lecture system.⁶ Interestingly, technological advances of the past few decades have created a revolution with regards to the very access to and the availability of the vast corpus of classical and modern Islamic and Arabic literature. The

digitisation of key *tafsīr* collections has meant that manuscripts and texts which were once the exclusive preserve of specialist libraries and collections can now be freely and easily accessed through a range of modern media, providing researchers with a wealth of sources, while also affording the materials a wider audience.⁷ The profusion of websites devoted to *tafsīr* from which whole commentaries and treatises can be readily obtained, some of which are original manuscripts, is remarkable. Even individual pages and sections of texts can be accessed and cross-referenced at the touch of a button, a far cry from the age when academic engagement with these materials was pursued solely through the use of manuscripts. Moreover, over the centuries the sheer volume of texts and commentaries devoted to the subject, many of which remain in manuscript form, underlines the fact that the academic exploration of Qur'ānic exegesis is at a critical stage.

Traditional sources and the history of *tafsīr*

In its conventional formation scholarship germane to the interpretation of the Qur'ān, like many of the religious sciences associated with early and medieval Islamic thought, was about engaging with the perceived legacy of the Prophetic era, giving appropriate form and definition to intertwined of its expression. Notwithstanding the classical sources' presumption of an ancient distinction between the discipline of *tafsīr* and other areas of learning such as law, *ḥadīth*, theology, history, and biography, medieval accounts of the development of *tafsīr* attached acute importance to the influential role that the exegetical legacy of the Prophet and his Companions played in the evolution of the discipline of exegesis.⁸ The traditional view was that explanations of the sacred text by the Prophet, his Companions, and their Successors were part of a living tradition which had been subsequently codified and preserved for posterity through conventional frameworks for the dissemination of knowledge. And, in the same way that precedent and hierarchical authority were used to determine theoretically the tenor of the normative teachings of law, ritual, and theology, the reference to traditional dicta was to play a key role in synthesising approaches to the explication of the text; and within this framework, the chains of transmission (*isnāds*) with which dicta and works were supported served as arbiters of textual authenticity. Eventually, all forms of *tafsīr* were presented as being originally formulated around the simple explication of the Qur'ānic elements of language and narrative, using the available corpus of materials conventionally sourced from the Prophetic era and immediately beyond to inform the processes of explanation. The legacy of the Pious Ancestors in this respect was traditionally portrayed as being informed by a utilitarian approach to the Qur'ān in which the contents of the text were provided with apposite resolution and context. Such treatments were seemingly rendered indispensable on the basis of the Islamic faith's making no distinction between its relevance

to the realm of both the spiritual and the temporal: all aspects of human endeavour fell under its jurisdiction. The inference is that while these luminaries' reflections on the moral and illustrative stories of the Qur'ān for the purposes of exhortation and instruction formed substantial elements of the discourse of *tafsīr*, they were also essentially combined with forms of exegesis which were predisposed towards the fleshing out of the legal, ritual, and theological teachings of the Qur'ān. Having been situated within the vector of scholarship which aimed at preserving and expounding upon the scriptural legacy of Islam, such ancient forms of *tafsīr* were furnished with the imprimatur of the Prophet: classical literature is replete with vignettes which extol those scholars who 'have acquired knowledge of the Qur'ān and disseminate it'; the Qur'ān itself speaks of the Prophet being sent to divulge and expound upon its contents.⁹ Anecdotes attributed to the Pious Ancestors echoed similar sentiments, declaring that the finest persons in the eyes of God are those who are well-grounded in their understanding of the sacred text and that [the pursuit of] knowledge of the Qur'ān was the apogee of wisdom.¹⁰ Exegetes could also draw inspiration from the Prophetic tradition which refers to the Qur'ān's comprising evident and veiled aspects to its meanings, a tradition which was regularly invoked by classical exegetes of all persuasions.¹¹

The traditional view was that although the approach to the interpretation of scripture refined by ancient luminaries, including the Prophet and the Companions, yielded a much coveted blueprint which later scholarship, guided by deference to precedent, could emulate, there was also room for exegetes to develop their own syntheses of *tafsīr*, working within the boundaries and guidelines predicated by the existing legacy of scholarship.¹² Still, despite this broad and idealistic characterisation of the original scope of *tafsīr*, which is redolent of an attempt to underline the historical depth and pedigree of *tafsīr*, in its subsequent manifestation, the formal interpretation of the Qur'ānic text was symbolized by its preoccupation with the explication of language, exempla, and interrelated narrative elements of the Qur'ān. Such areas became inextricable constituents of the classical discourse of *tafsīr* and were exponentially complemented with new aspects of investigation as the discipline developed. The exegetical attention which moral and illustrative stories of the Qur'ān received in the literature of *tafsīr* was a reflection of the fact that such materials originally formed imposing constituents of the Qur'ānic text, being employed for both edification and exhortation. The focus on exempla was to become one of the enduring and popular features of classical *tafsīr*; through them was presented an accessible medium for the presentation of beliefs and doctrine.¹³ Unquestionably, once fully developed as a discipline, such was the broad base and appeal of *tafsīr* that it accommodated traditional as well as rational approaches, enabling aesthetic, literary, theological, esoteric, sectarian, as well as philosophical treatments of the Qur'ān to emerge.¹⁴ Furthermore, the applied legal and ritual aspects of Qur'ānic explication retained a pervasive presence in the classical literature

of *tafsīr*, even though following the formative years, there were already in existence formal disciplines of learning within which such aspects of scholarship could readily thrive. The traditional accounts of the emergence of the discipline of *tafsīr* are viewed as being somewhat impressionistic and irenic but despite the elusiveness of the precise historical character of the dynamic which delivered the backdrop for the genesis of normative *tafsīr* and its subsequent efflorescence, it is indisputable that the resultant discipline supplied a matrix for a panoply of approaches and syntheses which were informed by an imposing set of hermeneutical tools and premises, enabling the discipline to emerge as one of the distinguished traditions of classical Islamic scholarship.

In the traditional sources it is the Companion figure ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās (d. 68/687–8), a cousin of the Prophet, who looms ever so large in accounts of the development of the interpretive tradition of the Qur’ān: he is auspiciously identified as the eponymous figurehead of exegesis in which language, exempla, ritual, law, and even eschatology provided focal points of attention.¹⁵ The celebrated biographical work *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, compiled by Muḥammad Ibn Sa’d (d. 230/845), preserves a profusion of reports which accentuate Ibn ‘Abbās’ expository skills, intimating that his reputation as an exegete appears to have emerged at a relatively early juncture in the classical literature.¹⁶ Certainly, biographical sources explicitly acknowledge that the Prophet and leading Companion figures served as founts for materials and teachings on *tafsīr* and that their own authenticated exegetical deliberations were deemed indisputably authoritative, despite their being confined to a select number of Qur’ānic verses.¹⁷ However, it is Ibn ‘Abbās who is presented as the putative author of a substantial portion of exegetical dicta, although there do exist reports in which he is portrayed as humbly admitting to his being indebted to Companions such as ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd (d. 32/652) for his knowledge of the interpretation of the Qur’ān.¹⁸ Significantly, preserved in the biographical literature is a report in which the Prophet had supplicated that Ibn ‘Abbās be ‘granted wisdom and an understanding of the Book’, while in a related dictum he is described by Ibn Mas‘ūd as being the veritable explicator of the Qur’ān (*turjumān al-Qur’ān*). Notably, even his ability to adduce poetry to resolve specific philological intricacies encountered in the language of the Qur’ān is typically acclaimed.¹⁹ It was Ibn ‘Abbās who is said to have declared that ‘*tafsīr* has four facets: a facet with which the Arabs are acquainted by virtue of their speech (habits); a facet which no one can be excused of not knowing; a facet which the paragons of knowledge are party to only; and, finally, a facet which is known to God alone: and the individual who claims to share this knowledge is a liar.’²⁰ Such statements were useful in regulating and formalizing approaches to *tafsīr* and were often ruminated over for context and bearing in the introductions to key commentaries. He is credited with the authorship of a number of works, although traditional sources as well as modern studies have cast serious doubts on their authenticity. While Ibn

‘Abbās’ precocious talent as an exegete and his expertise on legal and ritual matters are themes frequently accentuated in biographical dicta, of equal importance is the subtle adumbration of a scholarly connection between him and the emerging class of prospective proto-exegetes, including Mujāhid ibn Jabr (d. 104/722), Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr (d. 95/714), Tāwūs ibn Kaysān al-Yamānī (d. 106/724), ‘Ikrimah Mawlā ibn ‘Abbās (d. 105/723–24), and ‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāḥ (d. 114–15/732–33).²¹ Traditional sources uniformly distinguish elaborate hierarchical pedigrees for other cynosures of early *tafsīr* scholarship: thus the Companion Ubayy ibn Ka‘b (d. 20/641 or 22/643) is referred to as the progenitor of the Medinan tradition of exegesis which later inspired exegetes such as Abū ‘Āliyya al-Riyāḥī (d. 93/712), Muḥammad ibn Ka‘b al-Quraṣī (d. 118/736), and Zayd ibn Aslam (d. 136/753); whereas, revered figures including ‘Alqama ibn Qays (d. 62/682), Masrūq ibn al-Ajda‘ (d. 63/682), al-Aswad ibn Yazīd (d. 95/713), ‘Āmir al-Sha‘bī (d. 110/728), al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), and Qatāda ibn Di‘āma al-Sudūsī (d. 118/736), whose exegetical glosses and musings are an inexorable feature of classical *tafsīr* literature, were cast as heirs to the scholarship of *tafsīr* bequeathed by the Companion Ibn Mas‘ūd.²² And later proto-exegetes such as al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim (d. 102/720) and Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suddī (d. 127/745), who are both recognized for the prominence of their learning in the field of *tafsīr*, are influentially linked with paragons of the early *tafsīr* tradition and, along with a number of the aforementioned luminaries, are credited with being the authors of exegetical treatises, although the generally accepted consensus is that the authorship of fixed works by scholars from this generation was non-existent and that their teachings as preserved in the form of dicta were collated by later disciples as was the case with the *tafsīr* attributed to Mujāhid.²³

Despite this, succeeding generations of exegetes such as Ma‘mar ibn Rāshid (d. 154/770), Ibn Jurayj (d. 150/767), Muqātil ibn Sulaymān (d. 150/767), Muḥammad ibn al-Sā‘ib al-Kalbī (d. 146/763), Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/787), and Yaḥyā ibn Sallām (124–200/741–815) are identified as being the authors of exegetical compilations which preserved materials attributed to earlier authorities. Collectively, all of these luminaries are traditionally viewed as positively contributing to the evolution of *tafsīr* scholarship and their exegetical deliberations and thoughts are frequently alluded to in medieval *tafsīr* literature.²⁴ Yet, the content of classical exegetical literature shows that *tafsīr* was not simply a static endeavour which entailed recounting the views of the Pious Ancestors on selected features of Qur’ānic language and exempla, despite their views being critical to providing a substratum upon which the discipline could build. But rather *tafsīr*’s strategic base had been purposefully extended to incorporate a pastiche of traditional as well as rationally inspired areas of inquiry. Significantly, added to the panoply of exegetical topics were discussions about technical differences between the terms used to connote the practice of explaining the text, *tafsīr* and *ta’wīl*;

the authoritative sources and bases of *tafsīr*; hermeneutic categories and strategies for the broaching of *tafsīr*; the legitimacy of *tafsīr* and the expression of opposition to its practice; the lexical provenance of specific items from the Qur'ān's vocabulary; the textual transmission of the Qur'ān; and even topics such as the doctrine of the inimitability of the Qur'ān. The generative nature of *tafsīr* accounts for the lengthy discussions concerning the justification of its pursuit within established theoretical frameworks which featured in classical commentaries. The definition of the boundaries of *tafsīr* provided in the prolegomena to major *tafsīr* works offers a good indication of the overall focal points of the discipline and, despite differences in emphasis, it also reveals an awareness among exegetes of the formal mechanisms and goals of the discipline, a discipline which was to leave its indelible print on the traditions of classical Islamic thought.

Early *tafsīr* literature

Bearing in mind the elaborate procedures of dissemination and transmission which dictated the appearance of the earliest exegetical treatises, with texts often being collated and compiled by the students of given scholars, it is Muqātil ibn Sulaymān who has the distinction of being recognized as the author of one of the oldest surviving Qur'ān commentaries. Although within the text, much of Muqātil's exegetical deliberations are presented through sinuous chains of transmission, some of which appear editorially glossed, the work is exceptionally portentous, both in terms of its enduring influence upon the forms of *tafsīr* in which the treatment of Qur'ānic narrative and exempla is prominent, despite the criticisms levelled at its author, and for its place within the general history of the development of *tafsīr*.²⁵ Significantly, Muqātil is also the author of a number of shorter exegetical treatises, although later literature credits him with the composition of an impressive array of works, including treatises on abrogation, *variae lectiones* (*qirā'āt*), philology, and even a theological tract.²⁶ Among his extant works, besides the larger Qur'ānic commentary, is a text entitled *al-Wujūh wa'l-naẓā'ir*, which focuses on a thematic treatment of the homonymic and polysemic function of selected lexical items of the Qur'ānic vocabulary; and a closely related text which schematically analyses legal dimensions of Qur'ānic vocabulary, albeit emphasising the overall coherent unity of the text. The extant legacy of Muqātil underlines not only his expertise, but it also bespeaks the impressive levels of scholarship achieved within early exegesis. A cursory review at the content of his commentary shows why this was so. The text begins by referring to thirty paragons of the early tradition from whom the contents of his work were purportedly derived and that twelve of these individuals belonged to the generation who were successors to the Companions.²⁷ Establishing the credentials of the work, Muqātil then sets about underpinning the importance of *tafsīr* and

indeed *ta'wīl*, both of which were terms synonymously used to connote the practice of exegesis, highlighting statements to this effect on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās. He also presents an exegetical schema of the Qur'ān's contents, which includes notions about the generality and specificity of Qur'ānic verses; explicit contra ambiguous verses (*muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt*); grammatical suppletion and ellipsis; redundancy and completeness in the context of speech; abrogation; hyperbaton and hysteron proteron; homonymity and polysemy; intertextuality; parable; law and its categories, all of which underline the theoretical exactitude in approaches to exegesis which scholars were attempting to accomplish. The traditionist biographical sources are unremitting in their criticisms of Muqātil, especially with regards to his reliability and probity as a transmitter of *ḥadīth*; he is also rebuked for his crude anthropomorphism, although it is fascinating to note that his skills as an exegete were reported to have been acknowledged by notable luminaries.²⁸ The distinguished jurist Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204/820) is said to have remarked: 'On matters pertaining to *tafsīr*, people are verily dependent upon Muqātil ibn Sulaymān'; others had spoken of his being the most knowledgeable in *tafsīr*.²⁹ The ingenuity with which Muqātil presented his exegesis was not lost upon his peers; the ascetic figure 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181/797) is said to have commented, 'What a *tafsīr*! If only it had (the requisite) chains of transmission (*isnāds*)', while his namesake and contemporary, Muqātil ibn Ḥayyān, said of him 'that his knowledge was profound'.³⁰

A contemporary of Muqātil, the Kufan scholar Muḥammad al-Kalbī, was also the author of a popular *tafsīr*, although his reliability and integrity as a scholar were repeatedly questioned by prominent *ḥadīth* biographers, adversely affecting attitudes towards his work and overall legacy.³¹ Still, despite such censure his exegetical opinions continued to permeate the literature of *tafsīr*; and he was also recognised as a formidable expert on history and genealogy.³² The medieval biographer of leading exegetes, Shams al-Dīn al-Dāwūdī (d. 945/1538), suggests that respected traditionists did cite exegetical dicta attributed to him in their works.³³ Mention is made of his being the author of a popular *tafsīr* in addition to a work which listed tribes concerning whom specific verses of the Qur'ān were revealed; also placed among his literary works is a treatise on the types of abrogating and abrogated verses. It is notably highlighted that his legacy in the area of *tafsīr* is immense and that as a scholar of exegesis he is preferred to Muqātil due to the latter figure's dubious theological views. Al-Kalbī featured as a narrator for one of Ibn 'Abbās' informants, Abū Ṣāliḥ ibn Bādhām al-Kūfī, and it was the connection between these two figures, in terms of *isnād* documentation, which was vehemently criticised by traditionist scholars due to the existence of a report in which al-Kalbī freely acknowledged that materials he had related on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ from Ibn 'Abbās were counterfeit.³⁴ The fact that exegetes of a traditionalist bent continued to cite him with notable frequency is an indication of his influence as an exegete, yet it

sometimes intimates the supererogatory nature of the contexts in which the *tafsīr* materials he provides are cited.

Among the early texts there did exist *tafsīr* compilations which were purely collections of exegetical dicta attributed to the Prophet, the Companions and key Successor figures, many of which were systematically arranged around the individual chapters of the Qur'ān by students of the original compilers. These collections are sometimes viewed as representing a strictly traditionist based approach to *tafsīr* in which the dicta are presented through appropriate chains of transmission in the same way that the collections of Prophetic traditions or legal works were collated and arranged. Certainly, in such works the level of periphrastic comments is minimal, with the compiler presenting exegetical glosses attributed to early authorities and later generations of exegetes.

The *tafsīr* compilations associated with 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī and Sufyān al-Thawrī are two such texts, although the issue of whether they were originally independent works or composite collections of diffuse exegetical dicta belatedly collated by students does need to be borne in mind; it is through later recensions that the materials attributed to earlier authors were preserved and promulgated. Sufyān al-Thawrī's *tafsīr* was ostensibly transmitted by his student Abū Ḥudhayfa (d. 226/841), whom the biographical specialists identify as a reliable narrator cited by many of the renowned traditionists of the third/ninth century.³⁵ The *tafsīr* covers forty-nine chapters of the Qur'ān adhering sequentially to its traditional order, and it includes a confined selection of reports for each of the selected chapters. The reports are mostly statements attributed to pioneering generations among the early exegetes, but there are occasions when Sufyān is actually proffering an explanation or citing specific Qur'ānic readings, many of which are attributed to the Companion 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd.³⁶ Regarding the citation of earlier exegetical authorities, Sufyān al-Thawrī is reported to have exclaimed: 'beware of al-Kalbī', although it was pointed out to him, but you narrate materials from him to which he replied: 'I can distinguish between his truth and lies.'³⁷ The *tafsīr* attributed to 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī (126–211/743–826) is a much more extensive work which essentially comprises exegetical dicta transmitted by his mentor Ma'mar ibn Rāshid through *isnāds* sourced from earlier luminaries, although many of the chains of transmission for the exegetical dicta do commence with individuals other than Ma'mar. The work was narrated on the authority of al-Ṣan'ānī's student Salama ibn Shabīb al-Naysābūrī (d. 247/861) by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Salām al-Khushanī (d. 286/902). Set around the individual chapters of the Qur'ān, the level of personal comment originating from 'Abd al-Razzāq is negligible, although the technical formulae used to signify the modes of transmission within the individual *isnāds*, chiefly in respect of the employment of terms such as '*an*, *ahkbarānā*, *anba'anā*, and *qāla*, which connote modes of transmission between al-Ṣan'ānī and his informants, predicate subtle variations within which

materials were collated and synthesised. Significantly, the text has appended to it a preface in which basic hermeneutical categories of the Qur'ān's contents are presented.³⁸ The length of some of the dicta included in the course of the text is striking, while the sheer range of narrative and exempla it comprises is substantial. The text remains a valuable source of materials, preserving a profuse number of statements linked with exegetes such as Mujāhid, 'Ikrima, Qatāda, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Ibn Jurayj, al-Kalbī, Sufyān al-Thawrī, and other figures whose exegetical statements feature alongside Prophetic dicta and Companion reports; it was a source from which later authors of *tafsīr*, particularly the work of al-Ṭabarī, drew extensively.³⁹

The commentary compiled by the Mālikī scholar 'Abd Allāh ibn Wahb (125–197/743–812) characterises the variety of formats prevalent within early forms of exegesis.⁴⁰ Again, the text, referred to as *al-Jāmi'*, was transmitted by later authorities, differing in its organization of materials when compared with the treatises of Sufyān and al-Ṣan'ānī: it adopts a periphrastic method in which *isnāds* are used to introduce traditionally sourced dicta which in turn offer explanations of individual Qur'ānic verses. And a section of the original text is devoted to a discussion of a number of broad, but briefly surveyed themes, including traditions pertaining to matters of Qur'ānic exhortation; the merits of the Arabic diction in the context of its liturgical recitation; the phenomenon of variants (*ḥurūf al-Qur'ān*) and the textual transmission of the Qur'ān; abrogation; and even points of ritual such as the obligation of prostrating when reading designated verses from the Qur'ān.⁴¹ Exegetes identified with the early *tafsīr* tradition are cited in the text, making it a highly significant source, especially as the work was written in Egypt and therefore indicates the historical spread of the scholarship. This should come as no surprise as the earliest grammatical and philological treatises authored by influential linguists were already being promulgated in Egypt and North Africa (al-Maghrib).⁴² Perhaps even more influential is the voluminous *tafsīr* from this period composed by Yaḥyā ibn Sallām, whom the biographical sources link with early Iraqi exegetes, including the students of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Indeed, these sources connect him with some twenty-five early luminaries; and, notably, Ibn Wahb is reported to have been one of his disciples in Egypt. The Andalusian Qur'ān specialist Abū 'Amr al-Dānī (371–444/981–1053) said of Yaḥyā that he lived for a while in North Africa where he composed his *tafsīr*, a work he described as being unrivalled in the field.⁴³ The *tafsīrs* of both Yaḥyā and indeed Ibn Wahb illustrate not only the alacrity with which the codification of the scholarship of *tafsīr* had proceeded in the late second/eighth century, but also the gradual emergence of basic hermeneutical categories which were being developed to interpret the text. Furthermore, contributions made to the development of the forms of exegesis by luminaries associated with North Africa, which was host to key centres of learning, are likewise notable. It is worth mentioning that Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī (d. 575/1179), the author of the *Fahrasa*, a semi-bibliographical

source, provides an extensive list of early and classical exegetical works which were being circulated and taught in Andalusia, and with which he was acquainted.⁴⁴ The materials which featured in such works reveal a continuum between the earliest forms of *tafsīr* scholarship and the compilations of the late third/ninth century: conceptual nuances and techniques of engagement with exegetical materials which featured in these texts were exponentially refined in the later literature. Yaḥyā ibn Sallām makes explicit mention of hermeneutical categories with which scholars of *tafsīr* had to be familiar, included among which are the distinction of Meccan and Medinan categories of verses, abrogation, grammar, hyperbaton, and suppletion, echoing the typology outlined by Muqātil and expounded upon in later exegetical works.⁴⁵ Moreover, in the case of Yaḥyā's commentary, in it the author is frequently appraising exegetical reports, and passing judgement on their relative importance. Yaḥyā's work was well received in al-Andalus and was abridged by the scholar Ibn Abī Zamanīn (324–399/935–1008).⁴⁶ Certainly, much has been made of the fact that the commentary written by the Ibādī exegete Hūd ibn Muḥakkam (Flor. fourth/tenth century), a work which was hugely significant, relied upon the work of Yaḥyā.⁴⁷

Grammarians and the literature of *tafsīr*

The early grammarian contribution to the literature of *tafsīr* is immense and of far reaching significance: individual scholars produced pioneering treatments of the language of the text and played a pivotal role in formulating many of the paradigms and models which provided the linguistic foundations of analysis utilised in subsequent exegetical literature. Initially, aspects of the formal activity around which early linguistic thought was constellated appear to have been intricately intertwined with the efforts to preserve the very text of the Qur'ān and it was this preoccupation with the preservation of scripture that engendered an upsurge of linguistically focused activity, included among which were the documentation of Qur'ānic readings (*qirā'āt* or *variae lectiones*); the cataloguing of variances among Qur'ānic codices; the classification of phonological and phonetic conventions germane to the recitation of the Qur'ān; the definition of rules for the addition of diacritics into codices; the provision of lexical paraphrase for the Qur'ān's vocabulary; the collation of *loci probantes* sourced from poetry; and the documentation of dialects. The sudden and yet dramatic maturation of syntactical models for the explication of the language of the Qur'ān towards the end of the second/eighth century heralded a new phase in the development of exegesis with regards to its scope. Over successive years when composing their own works, authors of exegetical treatises were able to draw from the instruments of analysis devised by grammarians, who were to combine periphrastic treatments of the Qur'ānic narrative and grammatical analysis in their own works, ensuring a symbiotic relationship existed between the disciplines of grammar and exegesis.

One extant work in which the confluence of exegetical and grammatical enterprise appears both highly developed and complementary is the *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* of Abū Zakariyya' al-Farrā' (144–207/761–822), a figure typically recognized as one of the principal architects of an approach to language which later became synonymous with the Kufan tradition of linguistics.⁴⁸ Structured around the grammatical analysis of large segments of the text, the *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* navigates its way through selected verses from each chapter of the Qur'ān. Verses singled out for scrutiny are grammatically fleshed out and verified with reference to textual configuration, variants, dialects, lexical paraphrase, orthographical idiosyncrasies, and issues of transmission. Prominent in the body of analysis is the centrality which poetic citation plays in illustrating the linguistic integrity of usage and conventions, although al-Farrā' is at pains to point out that the Qur'ān is 'finer in terms of its linguistic qualities and a stronger proof for citation than poetry.'⁴⁹ Infrequent allusions to occasions of revelation, abrogation, Prophetic dicta, and exegetical explanations attributed to earlier exegetes do feature in the course of the work, although *ma'ānī* works were principally informed by the quest to justify and defend the linguistic constitution of canon. Al-Farrā''s oeuvre underscores the depth of his Qur'ānic expertise and his refined appreciation of the scholarship associated with the text's transmission: he composed works on orthographical variances among Qur'ānic codices; others devoted to philological treatments of the Qur'ān and even tracts which dealt with the conventions of Qur'ānic recitation and dialects. His own work was an important grammatical source cited by later exegetes, although, intriguingly, Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (164–241/780–855), the renowned traditionalist, is reported to have remarked that he used to hold al-Farrā' in great esteem until he read his *Ma'ānī* text.⁵⁰ The fact that parity with models of grammar became a gauge for the justification of the linguistic features of scripture did prove to be controversial and the tensions between traditional approaches to transmission and those which accentuated more rational considerations became an arresting feature of the classical discourses of exegesis and grammar, with arguments about the methods of authentication surfacing in the associated literature.

Further aspects of the contribution to exegesis by grammarians are displayed in the legacy of al-Farrā''s peer and mentor al-Kisā'ī (120–189/738–804). He is frequently cited in al-Farrā''s *Ma'ānī* for his expertise on grammar, Qur'ānic readings, and lexical data sourced from Arab tribes and credited with the composition of an impressive array of works, including a work entitled *Mutashābihāt al-Qur'ān*, which lists homographic phenomena among Qur'ānic verses, and a *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*.⁵¹ Such was al-Kisā'ī's expertise and standing in the textual transmission of the Qur'ān that his distinctive reading was later designated as being one of the seven canonical *lectiones* of the Qur'ān.⁵² Significantly, biographical accounts posit a connection between him and al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ (d. 215/830), who played a

critical role in the transmission of the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi (d. 177/793), the first systematic and comprehensive study of Arabic grammar, and is the author of a *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān* text which biographical sources claim primarily inspired the works of both al-Farrāʾ and al-Kisāʾī, although al-Akhfash's text, despite using a similar framework as al-Farrāʾ, focuses exclusively on grammatical issues and topics, occasionally betraying the theological leanings of its author.⁵³ A further work which belongs to the same historical epoch is the *Majāz al-Qurʾān* composed by Abū ʿUbayda Maʿmar ibn al-Muthannā (d. 210/825), a scholar whose contribution to Arabic philology is phenomenal.⁵⁴ He is the first figure to have coined the phrase *majāz* for the exemplification of idiomatic features of the Arabic diction employed in the Qurʾān, combining grammatical analysis along with the citation of poetry to illustrate usages and linguistic conventions.⁵⁵ In the preface to his work Abū ʿUbayda makes the case that the Companions of the Prophet were intuitively able to appreciate the meaning of the language of the Qurʾān, commenting that while contemporary generations among the Arabs no longer possessed such skills of perception, it was still possible to gauge the profundities of the Qurʾān's language and style. He argued that this could be achieved by relating them to the idiomatic features of Arabic as featured in the language and poetry of the ancient Arabs which had been preserved for posterity; he speaks of a symmetry which defined the language of the Qurʾān and that of the ancient Arabs; and his own work was about demonstrating and exploring this symmetry in the framework of the Qurʾānic expression. Also featured in Abū ʿUbayda's introduction to the *Majāz al-Qurʾān* is an ardent defence of the Arabic character of the Qurʾān in which it is argued that it comprises no foreign words; he warns that whoever opines the contrary had spoken the 'unspeakable'.⁵⁶

Biographical sources were very hostile to Abū ʿUbayda's *Majāz al-Qurʾān*: it was the subject of frequent criticisms originating from Basran and Kufan peers; furthermore, Abū ʿUbayda himself was the target of vituperative scorn, despite his being subsequently recognized as a formidable Basran scholar, although whether this was all part of a concerted effort to discredit him in the later sources remains plausible.⁵⁷ Among the related criticisms of Abū ʿUbayda and his work raised in the sources is the contention that he had resorted to speculative or unfettered reasoning, *al-tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*, when explaining Qurʾānic verses. It is his peer, al-Aṣmaʿī (122–213/740–828), who appears in the later biographical sources as being particularly scathing of his legacy.⁵⁸ Although the emergence of the schools of grammar had yet to materialize, it is telling that al-Farrāʾ censures opinions offered by Abū ʿUbayda in his *Maʿānī*.⁵⁹ Abū ʿUbayda did court the concept of linguistic redundancy or pleonasm (*ziyāda*) as an instrument of grammatical resolution which probably was a cause of great concern among his peers and successors. Indeed, references to his reliance on the concept do provoke a number of criticisms: the idea that embedded with the linguistic configuration of verses

of scripture were lexical elements which were otiose was deemed contentious; it would appear that even the application of the term *zā'ida*, when used to discuss the contents of the Qur'ān, was deemed theologically inappropriate.⁶⁰ The biographer al-Dāwūdī refers to an anecdote in which it is mentioned that Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (157–224/774–838) compiled an exegetical-grammatical treatise which fused the linguistic analyses of al-Farrā' and Abū 'Ubayda. It is reported that Ibn Sallām was apparently half-way through the text when he received a note from Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, expressing his dismay to learn that 'you are compiling a work on *qirā'āt* in which you have established al-Farrā' and Abū 'Ubayda as authorities in the area of *ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*: refrain from this.' He supposedly stopped working on the text.⁶¹ The anecdote features in the biographical account of the Basran linguist, exegete, and juris-consult, Ismā'īl ibn Ishāq al-Jahḍamī (199–282/813–895), who is described as being the author of a work entitled *Kitāb ma'ānī al-Qur'ān wa-i'rābihi*, comprising twenty-five volumes which was based on the original text of Abū 'Ubayd. Al-Jahḍamī's *tafsīr* has not survived but a sizeable fragment of his text devoted to a legal treatment of the Qur'ān entitled *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* has been published.⁶² Such biographical reports, if authenticated, do seem to suggest that aspects of the grammatical analysis of scripture were considered by some to be controversial, although in later years such methodologies and frameworks were to become standard instruments of analysis utilised within the scholarship of exegesis.

The range of grammatical discussions on Qur'ānic verses propounded upon by figures such as al-Kisā'ī, al-Farrā', al-Akhfash, Abū 'Ubayda, and Sībawayhi was subjected to clarification, qualification, and synthesis by later generations of grammarians and philologists, including luminaries such as al-Mubarrad (210–285–6/815–898), Ibn al-Sarrāj (d. 316/928), Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī (d. 377/987), Ibn Jinnī (d. 392/1002), al-Rummānī (d. 384/994), Tha'lab (200–291/815–904), Ibn al-Anbārī (260–328/874–939), and their successors. Furthermore, the stock of linguistic materials accumulated in the works of all these scholars served as critical linguistic sources upon which later medieval exegetes often relied. It is also the case that over successive periods, the authorship of writings which adopted the underlying framework of *ma'ānī*-type works, with their primary emphasis on resolving and defending the linguistic integrity and distinctiveness of the Qur'ānic diction, continued to be written, although, in instances, the apologetic dimensions of such works were often more pronounced: the *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān* composed by Ibn Qutayba (213–276/829–889) uses traditional exegetical themes germane to the transmission of the text of the Qur'ān to defend its linguistic integrity.⁶³ Notably, other writings such as the *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* commentary composed by the Basran grammarian al-Zajjāj (241–311/854–923) fused grammatical analysis with the extensive treatment of Qur'ānic narratives, discussing at length exempla, occasions of revelation, instances of abrogation, Prophetic dicta, and even key points of law and theology. Interestingly, al-Zajjāj seldom

identified the sources for his explanatory glosses on Qur'ānic exempla, although it is evident that the materials upon which he relied emanated from many of the key exegetes linked with the development of the *tafsīr* tradition.⁶⁴ Abū Ja'far al-Naḥḥās (d. 338/950), an Egyptian trained linguist, had chosen to make grammatical issues vis-à-vis the corpus of *variae lectiones* the focus of his work entitled *I'rāb al-Qur'ān*. One text which preserves many of the exegetical opinions associated with leading grammarians and philologists is *al-Nukat fi'l-Qur'ān* composed by 'Alī ibn Faḍḍāl al-Majāshī'ī (d. 479/1086). The work was arranged around the chapters of the Qur'ān but adopted a novel format in which the author introduced a condensed summary of exegetical issues by posing subtle questions which he then proceeded to answer through exegetical glosses; in parts of the text the procedure is reminiscent of a Socratic elenchus. Precociously steering its way through a conflation of exegetical and hermeneutical topics, the work underlines the levels of theoretical scrutiny and resourcefulness achieved within classical exegesis.⁶⁵ Moreover, somewhat related to the *ma'ānī* genre of writings were compilations which collated and provided exclusive grammatical syntheses of the canonical and non-canonical readings of the Qur'ān, many of which were compiled by leading Basran and Kufan luminaries.⁶⁶ Appearing under the rubric of *ḥujja* or *ih̥tijāj* works, commentators frequently adduced citations from these collections when introducing or analysing textual features of Qur'ānic canon in their commentaries.⁶⁷

The contribution of philologists and grammarians made by both Basran and Kufan scholars to the genre of writings which appeared under the rubric *gharīb al-Qur'ān* is immense. In these works select lexemes from the Qur'ān, deemed worthy of attention for their abstruseness, obscurity, and significance were provided with straightforward lexical equivalents. Interestingly, it is Ibn 'Abbās who is mentioned as the pioneering author of a *gharīb al-Qur'ān* tract, although classical sources and as modern scholarship have a lot to say about the way in which early authorities such as Ibn 'Abbās were linked with the authorship of works and exegetical dicta through the processes of pseudepigraphy and ascription.⁶⁸ Other references in the biographical sources to activity in the sphere of *gharīb* works highlight the endeavour of Abān ibn Taghlib (d. 141/768), who is said to have incorporated a profusion of poetic *loci probantes* in a work devoted to *gharīb al-Qur'ān*; the use of poetry as a tool to elucidate Qur'ānic vocabulary marks an important development within early exegesis.⁶⁹ In the *Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 380/990 or d. 393/1003), which provides an inventory of the literary works of the first four centuries of the Islamic tradition, it is stated that Abān was the author of a *ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* text in addition to a work on Qur'ānic readings.⁷⁰ While none of his writings has survived, the biographical sources do associate him with a number of scholars whose influence upon the tradition appears much more substantial, although he is frequently cited in later works as a source for various exegetical data.⁷¹ Later figures who are credited with the authorship

of *gharīb* works include Mu‘arrij al-Sadūsī (d. c. 204/819) Abū ‘Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām and Abū ‘Ubayda.⁷² Their putative works are not extant, but a summary glimpse of the discussion of obscure lexemes in later exegetical literature reveals the genuine frequency with which such figures are cited as respected authorities on philology. Somewhat related to the *gharīb* genre of writings were the tracts which appeared under the rubric *lughāt al-Qur’ān*. These isolated the origin of individual lexical items in the Qur’ān with reference to indigenous usage and even foreign vernaculars. The materials which featured in early works were not merely used as sources to be derivatively reproduced in later exegetical literature, but the genre of *gharīb* flourished *sui generis* over successive centuries. Indeed, like the *ma‘ānī* works they continued to attract the attention of scholars, inspiring a profusion of influential works; included among which were the *Gharīb al-Qur’ān* text composed by Ibn Qutayba and the text attributed to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Yazīdī; later works include Ghulām Tha‘lab’s *Yāqūtāt al-ṣirāṭ fī tafsīr gharīb al-Qur’ān*; Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib’s *Kitāb tafsīr al-mushkil min gharīb al-Qur’ān*; Ibn al-Jawzī’s *Tadhkirat al-arīb fī tafsīr al-gharīb*, which the author claimed was unique in its field due to its extending the concept of ‘*gharīb*’ to the individual word (*lafẓ*) and its meaning (*ma‘nā*); al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī’s *Mufradāt*, which arranged the lexemes alphabetically, providing brief glosses; Abū Ḥayyān’s *Tuhfat al-arīb bimā fī l-Qur’ān min al-gharīb*, and Ibn al-Mulaqqin’s *Gharīb al-Qur’ān*.⁷³ With its accent on brevity and accessibility, the genre of *gharīb* provided a conveniently elaborate medium for illuminating select lexical items of the Qur’ān; it was in these works that scholars could touch upon issues germane to both doctrine and dogma. The intellectual input of the grammarians and philologists formed a constituent part of the rubric of *tafsīr* scholarship and once combined with the review of ritual, law, and exempla, the bases from which exegesis of the Qur’ān could proceed were collectively consolidated.

Defining the boundaries of *tafsīr*

The circumscription of the theoretical compass of *tafsīr* emerged as an epistemological preoccupation of the classical literature with the prolegomena of the larger texts preserving circumspect summaries of preceding discussions. As has been noted the basic hermeneutical structuring of approaches to *tafsīr* appears to have its provenance in the second/eighth century as intimated by the works of Muqātil, al-Ṣan‘ānī, and Yaḥyā ibn Sallām.⁷⁴ The exegete al-Tha‘labī (d. 427/1035) spoke of twenty-four broad paths or themes forming the template for his treatment of the Qur’ān, many of which were subsumed under broader headings and given elaborate definition by later exegetes.⁷⁵ The Mu‘tazilite exegete, al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101–2), had commented that the sciences of the Qur’ān were copious, but went on to confine them within eight specific categories, which he listed under the

following headings: textual transmission; lexicon; syntax; literary arrangement; meaning; circumstance of revelation; proof and legal implication; and finally, exempla and narrative.⁷⁶ The Andalusian jurist and exegete Ibn Juzayy (693–741/1294–1340), who defined *tafsīr* as the explication of the Qur’ān’s import and the clarification of its meaning, identified eleven classical sub-sciences (*funūn*) around which revolved the interpretation of the Qur’ān.⁷⁷ Included among which were *qirā’āt* (the textual transmission of the Qur’ān and its *variae lectiones*), *aḥkām* (the text’s legal directives and rulings), *naskh* (the identification of classes of abrogated and abrogating verses applied in the context of law), *ḥadīth* (an awareness of exegetical related dicta and materials germane to the historical background of verses), *qīṣaṣ* (the discussion of exempla and narrative), *taṣawwuf* (mysticism and the esoteric dimensions of the text), *uṣūl al-dīn* (fundamentals of faith), *uṣūl al-fiqh* (principles of law and their bearing on the explication of the text), *luḡha* (philology), *al-naḥw* (grammar), and *bayān* (rhetoric).⁷⁸ Notwithstanding Ibn Juzayy’s admission that a number of these *funūn* furnished practical tools which facilitated the process of explication, it was around the selective treatment of areas associated with these disciplines that he structured his commentary, emphasising the concision he brought to his approach. It is worthy of note that when referring to the fundamentals of faith (*uṣūl al-dīn*) and their relationship with *tafsīr*, Ibn Juzayy commented that they essentially turned on the affirmation of doctrine through reference to the Qur’ān, but he also mentioned that groups with vested interests would cite the Qur’ān to support their doctrinal affiliations and polemical views, a reality which underlines the very significance of *tafsīr* and its importance among the religious sciences. The content of early and medieval texts of *tafsīr* was characterised by their commensurate treatment of one or more of these aforementioned areas (*funūn*), with underlying perspectives and interests inexorably influencing the approach adopted by an author.⁷⁹

Traditionalist concerns about the content and focus of *tafsīr* are summarized in an introductory exegetical epistle composed by the Ḥanbalite scholar Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328).⁸⁰ The epistle presents a synthesis of precepts which it argues should govern the pursuit of Qur’ānic exegesis, with its author remonstrating that *tafsīr* compositions frequently abound with falsehoods, irrelevances, and materials deemed worthless. Ibn Taymiyya represents a body of thought within traditionalist expressions of Islam which was opposed to forms of exegesis precariously considered to be of insipid relevance to the more functional aspects of faith and practice; such attitudes with regards to approaches materialise throughout the history of *tafsīr*, but in the figure of Ibn Taymiyya an assiduous voice could be found to counter what were perceived to be unrelenting extravagances in the pursuit of *tafsīr*. Drawing attention to the importance that authenticated sources should play in resolving differences on points of Qur’ānic interpretation, Ibn Taymiyya propounds the argument that all matters critical to faith and practice would

have been explained by the Prophet, or appropriate evidences would have existed. However, he does concede that the invitation to grapple with the profundities of the meaning of the Qur'ān is something of which the text itself approves, commenting that while a work written on the subject of medicine or mathematics would necessarily require clarification, a sacred text, which exists to offer salvation, guidance, and religious instruction, was *a fortiori* in greater need of apodictic explanation and contextualization. And while deduction and inference were acceptable components of Qur'ānic commentary, in the same way that they are applied when exploring the legal aspects of Prophetic practice, the authenticated materials on exegesis which were sourced from the earliest generations of luminaries should serve as the primary sources of an orthodox approach to *tafsīr*. In his summary it is intimated that the Companions rarely differed on matters of exegesis and that actual incidences of disagreements were never contradictory.⁸¹ Ibn Taymiyya refers to the futility of many of the differences which were voiced in popular Qur'ānic commentary such as speculation vis-à-vis the colour of the dog which features in the Qur'ānic account of the People of the Cave; the reference to the part of the cow with which the slain victim was struck; the physical dimensions of Noah's ark and the kind of wood from which it was constructed; or indeed the name of the young boy who was killed by al-Khaḍir in the Qur'ānic account of Moses and his page.⁸² In his view there was little gained from the pursuit of such frivolous details; he suggests that such preoccupations encouraged nothing but egregious abuses of the discipline of *tafsīr*, commenting that had such detail been critical to matters of faith, then appropriate evidences surrounding their import would have been provided in the scriptural sources. Such disquiet regarding the direction taken by certain forms of *tafsīr* has its roots within the formative tradition and remained a uniform element of arch-traditionalist concerns about *tafsīr* discourses, although it represents an admission of the influence *tafsīr* wielded; eventually, as we shall observe, even the more conservative forms of *tafsīr* often included material deemed trivial. Moreover, the broader point developed in the course of the epistle, which also includes a section on the best methods for the pursuit of *tafsīr*, is the desire to accentuate the authority of traditionalist frameworks for the pursuit of *tafsīr*.⁸³

Significantly, within early and classical forms of exegesis there materialised a decisive turn towards the adoption of a characteristically comprehensive approach to the text of the Qur'ān, leaving no facet of its contents and features unexplored or unexplained. Such approaches, which were frequently driven by the desire to make the interpretation of the text relevant to different contexts and circumstances, adopted a sundry blend of both traditional as well as rationally devised strategies and forms of analysis. Within these approaches, it was posited that while due deference should be granted to the established views articulated by the pious ancestors on exegetical matters, *tafsīr* intuitively embodied a nuanced way of engaging with the contents of

the Qur'ān. The role of the exegete was not simply confined to the promulgation and preservation of the stock of exegetical dicta attributed to the earliest generations of luminaries, but rather it also encapsulated the act of interaction with the text, making the discourse of interpretation relevant to different milieux, audiences, and concerns. The dynamic provided by the construct of interaction, which exegetes could validate through reference to Prophetic dicta, yielded a framework that scholarship could work within to harness constructive and resourceful ways of interpreting the Qur'ān.⁸⁴ Over the centuries, the vitality of this arrangement created the environment for a rich and broad body of *tafsīr* to flourish not only in the form of the steady appearance of individual Qur'ānic commentaries and works, but also treatises and tracts which focused on the fleshing out of a specific theme covered within the field of exegesis, allowing theological, legal, literary, mystical, and other discrete treatments to thrive. As previously noted the frameworks of textual analysis utilized within the tradition of *tafsīr* were brought in from the scholarship associated with subjects such as philology, syntax, morphology, the rhetorical sciences, and *variae lectiones*, many of which had their own distinguished history; furthermore, themes and topics such as abrogation and chronology; occasions of revelation; the virtues of the Qur'ān; and the doctrine of inimitability were all woven into the standard literary discourse of *tafsīr*, which was complemented by works which provided summaries and syntheses of the theoretical and methodological concepts applied in the interpretation of the Qur'ān. There is no question that the raw materials of this scholarship were provided by the corpus of individual exegetical dicta which scholars traced to the Prophetic era and the periods beyond, but *tafsīr*'s splendour lay in its ability to perpetuate the relevance of its discourse, using new areas and topics to expand its remit, while also retaining its traditional core.

Later literature and the legacy of *tafsīr*

The seminal commentary of Sunnī orthodoxy's most revered exegete, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (224–310/839–922), *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl ayy al-Qur'ān*, a voluminous work which grandly defined the benchmark for traditionalist *tafsīr* literature, confirms the overarching importance attached to precedent and hierarchical authority within traditional approaches to *tafsīr*. In the text Prophetic dicta and statements attributed to the Companions alongside those ascribed to pioneering generations of exegetes provide the foundation of his work.⁸⁵ Yet also striking within al-Ṭabarī's text is the author's circumspect deliberations in which he painstakingly weighs up, contextualizes, and summarises the exegetical dicta, offering his own glosses, thoughts, and preferences. Its exordium sheds considerable light on the historical nature of the methodological preoccupations of classical exegesis and the historical trajectories through which many of its conceptual

constructs had passed.⁸⁶ Indeed, the author's preliminary deliberations are overwhelmed by discussions germane to the prerequisites for the pursuit of *tafsīr*.⁸⁷ Still, in the works of the earlier scholars such as al-Ṣan'ānī and Yaḥyā ibn Sallām, al-Ṭabarī was able to find valuable analogues for basing his own work.⁸⁸ And the scholarship of the grammarians provided him with much material for reflection. The attention devoted to the treatment of philological, grammatical, legal and even theological topics is likewise significant as is the coverage of Qur'anic exempla, confirming the diversity of sources upon which he relied. Al-Ṭabarī delivers a cogent case for the use of knowledge of Arabic and the linguistic sciences when gauging scripture; his arguments are reminiscent of the views on the subject presented by Abū 'Ubayda, confirming the lasting impact which linguistic discussions had upon the discourse of *tafsīr*. Explaining the importance of the doctrine of the Qur'ān's inimitability, al-Ṭabarī refers to the irrefutable concord between the language of the Qur'ān and that of the Arabs, in the sense that its language was enshrined in a diction with which the Arabs to whom it was revealed would have been familiar; he reasons that this very fact predicated that a thorough appreciation of the rhetorical and stylistic traits of the Arabic language would yield pertinent analogues for appreciating and understanding the language of the Qur'ān.⁸⁹ He even intimates that misunderstandings in the realm of *tafsīr* were the result of a defective knowledge of the language. Significantly, successive generations of later commentators paid tribute to the achievements of al-Ṭabarī, although it seems probable that his theological conservatism also contributed to the positive reception his work received over the centuries. He was to gain accolades from all quarters: the Egyptian jurist and exegete al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1496) declared that al-Ṭabarī's work had collated the various strands of *tafsīr* scholarship and made them accessible.⁹⁰ Ibn Taymiyya concluded that al-Ṭabarī's work was the most sound of Qur'ānic commentaries, commenting that he had not only attached apposite importance to the statements of the pious ancestors, but he also omitted materials of a pejorative quality. Ibn Taymiyya even proffers the view that al-Ṭabarī did not transmit the views of individuals who were criticised by traditionalist scholars, such as Muqātil and al-Kalbī, and that he had relied upon authentic *isnāds*. Interestingly al-Kalbī does feature in his work and even traditionalist scholars were known to have queried the authenticity of certain dicta adduced in al-Ṭabarī's work, although one suspects that Ibn Taymiyya was speaking in relative terms: namely, among the available *tafsīr* works, al-Ṭabarī's commentary was a more reliable text.⁹¹

While al-Ṭabarī's work is seen as representing a landmark in the literature of *tafsīr* due to the significance of its scope, content, and influence, the fecund stream of exegetical works and treatises written both before and after the appearance of his commentary demonstrates the subtle diversity of approaches prevalent in *tafsīr* and the complexity of the ideological constructs

which informed them. Exegetical literature confirms not only the uniqueness of the forum afforded by the discipline of *tafsīr*, but also the individuality and creativity with which treatments were achieved as authors mindfully extolled the distinctiveness of their works. Al-Tha‘labī uses the introduction to his *Kashf wa’l-bayān* to refer to glaring inadequacies in the previous literature before asserting that his commentary of the Qur’ān would be both comprehensive and consummate; his work had an enormous influence on later exegetical literature.⁹² His pupil, al-Wāḥidī (d. 468/1076), was the author of three very influential commentaries: *al-Basīt*, *al-Wasīt*, and *al-Wajīz*, which were all written for different audiences and purposes. It was al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058) who opened the introduction to his commentary, *al-Nukat wa’l-‘uyūn*, by declaring that his goal was to explore the less apparent aspects of the Qur’ān’s meaning, relying upon the preserved statements of the Pious Ancestors and those of the Successors. He also stresses that engaging with such aspects of the text could only be achieved by deference to precedent and individual application; so revered was the commentary that it was the subject of an abridged edition by al-‘Izz ibn ‘Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1261).

Writing in one of Asia’s oldest cities, Abū’l-Layth al-Samarqandī (d. 373/983), in a work entitled *Baḥr al-‘ulūm*, tied the notion of the Qur’ān’s inimitability to the question of its interpretation, arguing that the very fact that the Qur’ān was as a prophetic proof (*ḥujja*) for Arabs and non-Arabs, predicated that scholars were obliged to explore its meaning and interpretation, although it was imperative that individuals had to be acquainted with the characteristics of its language and the circumstances which governed the revelation of verses; the crispness and lucidity with which he tackles individual verses are complemented by al-Samarqandī’s impressive marshalling of the sources and his percipient awareness of the ensuing exegetical debates to which he alludes.⁹³ Al-Samarqandī’s predecessor, Abū’l-Manṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944), the eponym of the Māturīdī school of theology and the author of the formidable commentary entitled *Ta’wīlāt ahl al-Sunna*, had made theological and dialectical discussions the focus of his exegetical work, intertwining them with legal, narrative, and traditional topoi. In the introduction to his work al-Māturīdī had spoken of the theoretical distinction between *tafsīr* and *ta’wīl*: in his view, the former was specific to rehearsing the authenticated statements of the Companions who were witnesses to revelation; he then explains that *ta’wīl* was about locating a concatenation of semantic and causal connections which distinguished Qur’ānic verses. He remarked that on that basis, one had to be cautious when engaging in *tafsīr* for through it declarations were being made about the Almighty’s intent; on the other hand, *ta’wīl* was about situating speech within its natural vector without making claims about God’s intent.⁹⁴ Accordingly, *tafsīr* operates on a single plane, whereas *ta’wīl* has many elevations.⁹⁵ Later generations of Māturīdī theologians attached great importance to the *Ta’wīlāt ahl al-Sunna* and a commentary of the work was written by one of the students of Abū’l-Mu‘īn

al-Nasafī (d. 508/1114), Muḥammad al-Samarqandī, who based it on the notes (*ta'liqāt*) of his mentor. Interestingly, it is not insignificant that the focus on *ta'wīl* served as the *raison d'être* of esoteric *tafsīr*. Another important theologically inspired work from this period is the *tafsīr* of the Ash'arite theologian Ibn Fūrak (348–406/941–1015), who imaginatively arranged his work around a presupposed dialectical format in which a series of brief questions is posited about the lexical items of each of the verses from a chapter under consideration, prompting him to offer shrewd explanatory responses which drew from a selection of linguistic and exegetical sources.⁹⁶ The fact that scholars were electing to produce commentaries when there was a surfeit of material already available underlines the prestige which the discipline afforded and the influence it exercised.

Among the hermeneutical categories which were devised by early exegetes for the classification of the Qur'ān's contents was the division of its verses into *muḥkamāt* (perspicacious and self-evident) and *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous and indistinct) classes; the terms used for this division have their origin in a Qur'ānic pericope, Q. 3:7, which offers an adumbration of two categories of revelation. Later exegetes extrapolated the Qur'ānic understanding of these terms, developing conceptual paradigms which were used to theorise about interrelated approaches to issues of interpretation. Reports attributed to renowned authorities such as Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, Qatāda, and al-Ḍaḥḥāk do reveal differences with regards to the import of the terms *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt*, making it difficult to gauge how the understanding of these terms impacted upon attitudes towards interpretation.⁹⁷ Al-Farrā' briefly explains that the *muḥkamāt* include verses which elucidate the lawful and the prohibited and are not subject to abrogation. He then identifies a specific set of verses in which they are exemplified before moving on to place in the category of *mutashābihāt* the 'disjointed' or 'mysterious' letters with which twenty-nine chapters of the Qur'ān begin.⁹⁸ In his commentary al-Ṭabarī offers a detailed discussion of the differences about the meaning of these terms, initially suggesting that verses which were *muḥkamāt* remained self-evident with regards to their meaning and detail insofar as from them proofs issued for legal, ethical, and moral teachings, which make up the bulk of the Qur'ān's contents, while *mutashābihāt* verses were connected to an opposition of sorts between recitation and meaning.⁹⁹ Al-Ṭabarī observes that earlier exegetes differed over the technical compass of the two categories with some scholars speculating that *muḥkamāt* verses were those which retained practical relevance, namely materials with a legal nexus; the view is notably flagged that *mutashābihāt* verses fell into the class of abrogated or discarded materials. The opinion was also expressed that *muḥkamāt* verses of the Qur'ān were those which could be readily understood; whereas, *mutashābih* ones were open to interpretation.¹⁰⁰ For some scholars the category of materials designated as being *mutashābihāt* applied to the Qur'ān's subtle references to the signs of the impending judgement together with eschatological allusions and

even the ‘mysterious letters’ of the Qur’ān.¹⁰¹ On the surface, one might be able to identify lexically the content of *mutashābihāt* verses, but within them lay connotations and significations which were either obscured or simply unknown. It should be noted that the existence of a theoretical division of the Qur’ān’s verses into *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* categories in no way arrested the enthusiasm with which exegetes wrestled with every conceivable aspect of the Qur’ān’s meaning and language. Indeed, this very fact was not lost on Ibn Taymiyya, who lamented that philologists contradicted themselves for although they subscribed to the view that the Qur’ān comprised verses whose meanings were concealed or *mutashābihāt*, they continued to offer views as to their meaning. Incidentally, he was of the opinion that the notion of *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* verses in no way impinged upon scholars’ ability to fathom the meanings of the Qur’ān.

Despite commencing his summary of the different views of the concept of *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* with the statement that resolving their nature remained perplexing and intractable, al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī concludes his survey of existing views with a question which asks about the virtues of the existence of *mutashābihāt* verses in the Qur’ān.¹⁰² He posits that the quest to fathom the import of such verses exercised the mind and that individuals were rewarded for ingeniously dissipating their energies therein. Vagaries surrounding the semantic compass of these terms as reflected in the different definitions provided by early and classical exegetes imply that the categories were never deemed to be prescriptive in ways which curtailed the activities of exegetes. On the contrary, as argued by al-Rāghib, some exegetes spoke of the stimulative effect of this categorisation in that it spurred on scholars to take the act of interpretation beyond the pale of simply recounting the views of early scholarship on the meaning of verses. It is telling that in the opening section of his commentary al-Ṭabarī mentioned seeking God’s guidance in arriving at the correct views with regards to the Qur’ān’s *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* content. Also significant is the fact that differences regarding issues of designation were exploited to promulgate theological arguments and even used to provide justification for the pursuit of the forms of esoteric *tafsīr*.¹⁰³ One renowned exegete remarked that theologians could purposefully cite verses of the Qur’ān which supported their ideologies and expediently place them into *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* categories.¹⁰⁴ So for example, Mu’tazilīte scholars, who as rational theologians advocated the doctrine of man’s free will and the utter transcendence of God, insisting that he cannot be physically seen, would argue that the verse in the Qur’ān, Q. 75:23, which refers to the believers physically seeing their Lord on the Day of Judgement, was simply *mutashābih*; it did not predicate that God could be seen; conversely, the verse which pronounces that sight cannot perceive him but it is God who perceives sight, Q. 5:103, would be designated by them as being *mūḥkam*; the opponents of such theological views would simply reverse the designation. Al-Ṭabarī speaks of there being

aspects of the Qur'ān's meaning which no one can fathom and these relate to its allusions to ages past and future, including the impending judgement day; the blowing of the trumpet; and the descent of Jesus.¹⁰⁵ The legacy of the *muḥkamāt* contra *mutashābihāt* construct is a lasting one to which the prolific vein of the literature of *tafsīr* bears testimony. Over the centuries, the appeal to this mechanism instilled in exegetes a further sense of purpose with which to engage with the text's meaning, consigning to history the notion that *tafsīr* was a somewhat clichéd enterprise.

Biographical criticism and the early exegetes

Concerns about the reliability and authenticity of literary reports used interpretively in areas of exegesis, particularly with regards to Qur'ānic exempla, did surface frequently in the classical exegetical and traditionist literature. Furthermore, the probity of a number of renowned early exegetes was called into question as was evident in the case of figures such as Muqātil and al-Kalbī: it is notable that the *ḥadīth* critic Ibn 'Adī (277–365/891–976) refers to criticisms aired concerning Ibn Jurayj's credentials as a transmitter of *ḥadīth*; yet despite this he does insist that exegetical reports linked to him were accepted.¹⁰⁶ Due to the fact that materials attributed to such individuals were used for the auxiliary purposes of exhortation and edification, it was conceded that subsidiary criteria could be invoked when citing them, although concerns about the veracity of material remained manifest.¹⁰⁷ Parallels could be found in the arguments relative to the use of *ḥadīths* whose *isnāds* were classed as being defective or weak (*ḍa'īf*). In its canons of authentication Muslim scholarship placed immense emphasis upon the scrutiny of the narrators who appeared in the chains of transmissions (*isnāds*); levels of authenticity turned on judgements germane to the reliability and honesty of the narrators and other sundry criteria, although subtle forms of text (*matn*) criticism were inherent in the processes of authentication. A tripartite division of traditions into *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic), *ḥasan* (sound), and *ḍa'īf* (weak) categories existed. An authentic tradition had to have a continuous *isnād* which included individuals deemed trustworthy and reliable. It was further specified that the content of the tradition should not undermine traditions whose authenticity was already established beyond doubt and nor should it suffer from any subtle defect, which could relate to an aspect of its *isnād* or indeed some feature of the material contained within the report it supported. Generally speaking, traditions which did not fully meet the above criteria were classed as being *ḥasan*; dicta whose *isnāds* failed to meet any of the above conditions stipulated for *ṣaḥīḥ* and *ḥasan* traditions were simply referred to as *ḍa'īf*. Technically speaking only traditions which were either *ṣaḥīḥ* or *ḥasan* could be adduced for the synthesis of law, ritual, and doctrine. However, scholars did engage in arguments as to whether those materials classed as being defective could be used for the purposes of exhortation and edification (*faḍā'il al-a'māl*). Within

the context of *tafsīr* materials, similar considerations applied, allowing defective traditions to be cited for the purposes of edification, illumination, and reflection; hence it would be surmised that their bearing upon legal as well as theological discourses was deemed inconsequential, although, traditionist specialists did regularly raise concerns about the paths of transmission through which materials ascribed to earlier authorities had passed.¹⁰⁸

It is probably in the context of broader issues germane to authenticity and reliability that the *ḥadīth* specialist al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071) drew attention to a report stating that the traditionalist scholar Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal once remarked that ‘three books have no bases: *maghāzī*, *malāḥim*, and *tafsīr*’.¹⁰⁹ Offering an explanation for this statement, al-Khaṭīb protests that works in these fields were replete with unsubstantiated reports and a surfeit of dubious stories; he explains that questions remained about the reputation of the authors of these works, pronouncing that their transmitters were untrustworthy. He even singles out the treatises of both Muqātil and al-Kalbī, of whose *tafsīr* Ibn Ḥanbal is said to have remarked: ‘From the beginning to its end, it is a concoction’. Similarly, Sufyān al-Thawrī, who had widely trumpeted his own intimate knowledge of the Qur’ān, is reported to have voiced his disapproval of those scholars, such as al-Kalbī, whose interpretation of a chapter of the Qur’ān began with its opening verses and continued inclusively to its very last ones, although this practice was to be one of the characteristic features of so much of the tradition’s later literature and as noted previously Sufyān availed himself of al-Kalbī’s materials in his own *tafsīr* as did numerous exegetes.¹¹⁰

There was also apprehension about the sheer magnitude of materials being expediently attributed to ancient authorities: the Ash‘arite traditionist al-Bayhaqī (d. 458/1066) referred to a statement in which al-Shāfi‘ī is said to have commented that around one hundred traditions on the subject of *tafsīr* only could be accurately attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās; yet, one notes that the exegetical views and statements identified with him in the later literature reached epic proportions.¹¹¹ Other renowned exegetes are the subject of contradictory statements about the nature of their trustworthiness: al-Suddī is said to have been inveighed against by the *ḥadīth* scholar al-Sha‘bī, although one early biographical text refers to him as an expert on Qur’ānic commentary as well as being a transmitter; others were less complimentary about him and had little confidence in the *isnāds* used for his *tafsīr*.¹¹² His son Muḥammad ibn Marwān was likewise the subject of stinging criticisms to the extent that the *isnāds* in which he featured alongside al-Kalbī and Abū Ṣāliḥ were described as being ‘chains of lies’. In spite of that, concerns about the extent of the reliability of some of the exegetical materials did not impinge upon their being regularly attested or alluded to in later exegetical works.¹¹³ The scale of criticisms levelled at Muqātil has already been noted, despite the fact that his talent as an exegete is openly acknowledged and that some of the traditions in which he featured as a transmitter were deemed reliable.¹¹⁴ It was

Ibn Taymiyya who declared that the crude doctrines of anthropomorphism which Muqātil was accused of promoting, as documented in al-Ash'arī's doxography of sects, *Māqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, were possibly an exaggeration on the part of Mu'tazilite figures and potentially discriminatory sources upon which al-Ash'arī had relied in compiling his work.¹¹⁵ He even states that there can be no doubt regarding Muqātil's erudition in *tafsīr*; still, one noted above that Ibn Taymiyya praised al-Ṭabarī on account of his eschewing the exegetical musings of al-Kalbī and Muqātil. Nonetheless, the criticisms of certain exegetes continued to surface in the biographical literature and even sometimes in the prefatory remarks in commentaries which alluded to criticisms levelled at certain scholars. The Shī'ite commentator al-Ṭūsī speaks of the need to emulate exegetes whose methods were praised such as Ibn 'Abbās, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Qatāda, and Mujāhid, while avoiding reliance upon those who were excoriated such as Abū Ṣāliḥ, al-Suddī, and al-Kalbī.¹¹⁶ Even the epithet '*ḥāṭib layl*', which can figuratively connote acting in an inadvertently reckless or ill-prepared way, is used to describe the exegetical activities of the Basran luminary Qatāda.¹¹⁷ Related criticisms do exist for individuals such as al-Ḍaḥḥāk, 'Ikrima, Mujāhid, and Yaḥya ibn Sallām. The discussions about reliability and probity form part of a wider dialectic about authority in the context of the hegemony of traditionalism. Although, it must be borne in mind that in these later periods the repertoire of topics covered in the field of exegesis was vast and the exegetical dicta and discussions from the early generation of scholars formed part of a larger exegetical edifice.¹¹⁸

Regarding the existence of opposition to *tafsīr* during and beyond the formative periods, advocates of *tafsīr* would always argue that apposite frameworks existed for its pursuit and that any hostility was principally directed to forms of exegesis which were deemed utterly speculative or gratuitous.¹¹⁹ Thus, while successive generations of early luminaries such as 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar (d. 74/692–3), Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab (d. 94/712) and Shu'ba Ibn al-Ḥajjāj (83–160/702–776) are said to have shunned and disapproved of *tafsīr*, such reticent attitudes were traditionally explained away by observations that they were ostensibly opposed to forms of exegesis which focused on the explication of exempla, narrative, and language without recourse to authenticated dicta or because such forms of exegesis were driven by attempts to exploit and subvert the meaning of scripture. Although, it was argued that such reports were seen as being deliberately designed to create the impression of opposition. Elsewhere it was recognized that there was never any suggestion that the Companions themselves provided a commentary of the Qur'ān in its entirety. Shu'ba is presented as a stern critic of al-Suddī, although the latter figure's exegetical glosses are a permanent feature of the classical literature. While it is reported that whenever Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab was asked about the explanation of a verse of the Qur'ān, he is said to have retorted that 'I say nothing about the Qur'ān' and there are even reports which describe him as being the most learned when it came to legal matters,

but that whenever he was asked about the *tafsīr* of a verse, he held his silence, telling his enquirer to ask the person who alleges that nothing of [the Qur'ān] is concealed from him: namely, 'Ikrima.¹²⁰ The impression created by such narratives is that he was refraining from commenting upon aspects of exempla or parts of the Qur'ān which were deemed theological sensitive. During these formative years and over later periods, such opposition did not arrest the enthusiasm with which these areas were broached in the discourse of the early and classical literature of *tafsīr*, underlining the reality that attitudes to the issue of approaches and use of sources varied sharply.¹²¹

Al-Ṭabarī preserves a statement in his introduction in which 'Ubayd Allāh ibn 'Umar declares that he had lived at the time of the jurists of Medina such as Sālim ibn 'Abd Allāh, al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad, Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab, and Nāfi', and each of them viewed '*tafsīr*' with utter consternation. Still, the inclusion of such reports by commentators in their introductory statements is telling for although scholars were acknowledging a divergent view, they were relegating its importance by adducing contradictory dicta which overwhelmingly endorsed the pursuit of *tafsīr*. Indeed, in some works dicta which counsel refrain in matters pertaining to *tafsīr* are simply alluded to or interpreted in ways which confine them to a specific context. Scholars argued that reports such as the dictum ascribed to the Prophet's wife 'Āi'shah in which she had spoken of his abstaining from interpretation, but for a confine number of verses whose import had been inspired to him, had to be understood in the context of his refrain from indulging in the exegesis of topics which either belonged to the realm of the unknown or packed little practical or moral efficacy.¹²² Conversely, it was absurd to claim that the construct of opposition applied to forms of exegesis deemed obligatory for the enactment of law, ritual, and dogma, for in the identical vein that scholars spontaneously broached their discussions of jurisprudence and ritual through reference to Prophetic convention and practice, similarly regulated approaches to *tafsīr* with comparable aims were entirely justified; additionally, it was accepted that in the same way that scholars might fail to appreciate subtle aspects of Prophetic practice and convention (*Sunna*), it was equally possible that certain meanings of the text could escape their attention. Al-Ṭabarī makes it plain in his own commentary that the import of the legislative discourse of the Qur'ān would have been made manifest by the Prophet.¹²³

Also connected to the construct of opposition to *tafsīr* was the marked criticism of so-called *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* (exploratory exegesis); its specification remained somewhat indistinct, although the attempt by classical commentators to disassociate themselves from the practice of *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* and the trenchant defences of their endeavours betray aspects of the primary issues at stake. The implication is that following the formative periods, scholars of a sternly traditionalist bent remained vehemently opposed to exegetical endeavour which was deemed to foster a tentatively speculative approach to

tafsīr, especially if it entailed weighing up or developing exegetical views and analyses without recourse to precedented authority; and this was also the case when such activity was viewed to be of subordinate relevance to faith and practice.¹²⁴ The importance of this point is that the forms of *tafsīr* commonly practised in the burgeoning body of classical exegetical literature were based on making informed choices guided by a combination of precedent, circumspect analysis, and judgement; it could be argued that such endeavour belonged to the realm of *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*.¹²⁵ The allusion to the opprobrium engendered by such endeavours formed part of a traditionalist strategy to restrain some of the excesses associated with normative *tafsīr*.

The discussion of opposition to *tafsīr* and *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* features prominently in Ibn Juzayy's introductory summary. He speaks of divisions among scholars regarding the pursuit of Qur'ānic exegesis, pointing out there were scholars who freely engaged in interpreting the text and expounding upon its meanings and they represented a majority; while conversely there were those individuals who refrained from such endeavours on account of the Prophetic dicta which counselled that exegesis of the sacred word should be approached with absolute caution. To provide some context to the general discussions Ibn Juzayy turns his attention to two relevant dicta: the first of which is the aforementioned tradition linked with the Prophet's wife 'Āi'shah, while the second tradition declares that 'He who ventures opinions about the Qur'ān and is correct has actually erred', a dictum which even traditionalist specialists suggested was of dubious authority.¹²⁶ Referring to the first tradition, Ibn Juzayy explains that it was uttered in the context of the Prophet's abstaining from explaining the import of Qur'ānic verses which were classed as belonging to the realm of the unknown; commenting on the second tradition, he insists that scholars who approached the exegesis of the text through its established sciences and in deference to the statements of the Pious Ancestors could not possibly be accused of indulging in unfettered exegesis.¹²⁷ Despite the somewhat idealistic tone which colours his account of attitudes towards exegesis, Ibn Juzayy's deliberation over the issue of opposition and the perils of *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* is presented not as an historical phenomenon safely consigned to the past, but rather one with which scholars were continually grappling. Significantly, the general thrust of the discussions about the legitimacy of *tafsīr* presented by Ibn Juzayy appears with formulaic regularity in the introductions to earlier and later exegetical texts. Such discussions also extend to the theoretical bases and goals of *tafsīr* and the prominent role that the corpus of exegetical dicta transmitted on the authority of the Pious Ancestors should play in its synthesis.

The locus classicus synonymous with the censure of *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* is the Prophetic dictum which warns that 'He who interprets the Qur'ān guided by opinion (*ra'y*) should stake his place in hell'; it was sometimes juxtaposed with a similar tradition condemning individuals who err by venturing opinions on the Qur'ān which by mere coincidence happen to be correct; unsurprisingly,

numerous classical commentaries referred to these and other related traditions in introductory sections devoted to denouncing *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*, although, as pointed out, doubts were raised about the authenticity of the supporting *isnād* documentation for this *ḥadīth*; still it was zealously adduced in classical commentaries by authors who maintained that their efforts were free of such reprehensible excesses.¹²⁸ The traditionist al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892), who cited both *ḥadīths* in his *Jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ* collection at the beginning of a section of the work dealing with Qur'ānic exegesis, included a gloss while mentioning these traditions, asserting that a number of the Companions of the Prophet and other individuals were exceptionally strict when it came to permitting the interpretation of the Qur'ān without recourse to 'ilm, by which he seems to imply knowledge based on precedent.¹²⁹ He even declares that while scholars such as Mujāhid and Qatāda are said to have 'interpreted (*fassara*) the Qur'ān' one should not assume that 'they said of the Qur'ān or interpreted it without knowledge, or proceeded on the basis of their own views.' Commenting that there do exist reports which would confirm this fact, he adduces a statement in which the exegete Qatāda pronounces that 'there is not a verse in the Qur'ān, save that I have heard something concerning it.'¹³⁰ Similar assertions are attributed to exegetes such as Mujāhid, who is reported to have declared that 'I reviewed the *muṣḥaf* with Ibn 'Abbās, getting him to pause at every single one of its verses, whereupon I would enquire (of their meaning).'¹³¹ The appeal to authority in the form of precedent is a topos which pervades the discourse of classical Islamic thought and, like all the traditional sciences, knowledge reliably and accurately transmitted on the authority of the Pious Ancestors theoretically commanded superior weight and influence.

The highlighting of such views created the impression that *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* encapsulated forms of exegesis which were based on materials not exclusively sourced from the corpora of existing Prophetic dicta or reports emanating from the Companions and the earliest generations of Pious Ancestors. Be that as it may, a considerable portion of the exegetical glosses which appeared in the literature of *tafsīr* did not necessarily meet the criterion of having been based on an established statement or view, but was arrived at through reference to normative procedures. Offering his own apologia for the pursuit of *tafsīr*, al-Ṭabarī uses the reference to *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* to confirm that it was intended to be condemnatory of the exegetical pursuit of aspects of meanings of the text for which no authenticated Prophetic statements existed or areas which belonged the realm of the 'unfathomable'.¹³² Summing up, he even declares that his defence had invalidated the views of those who rebuke the exegesis practised by most commentators. He also dismisses the relevance of the tradition relating to 'Ā'ishah's claim that the Prophet refrained from *tafsīr* with the exception of select verses, inferring from it that the Prophet explained all requisite aspects of the legislative dimensions of the text.¹³³ This point serves as a corollary to his contention that while it is undeniable that certain figures among the Companions refrained from the practice of *tafsīr*

and that it was also true that there were individuals who humbly desisted from proffering views on legal matters; their refrain was not indicative of an underlying denunciation of such activity; neither should their diffidence be construed as invalidating the practice of law or indeed *tafsīr*. Others such as Abū'l-Layth al-Samarqandī identified *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* as being exegesis which is spontaneously pursued without one's being acquainted with the aspects of the Qur'ān's language and the circumstances of its revelation; and later classical exegetes reiterate similar points.¹³⁴

Referring to the issue of the interpretation of the Qur'ān and the resort to *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*, and intent upon probing the wider issues at stake, the Shāfi'ite scholar Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 555/1111) sheds considerable light on the assertion that *tafsīr* was a closed endeavour confined to recounting verbatim the exegetical statements dutifully transmitted on the authority of the Prophet, the Companions, and the Pious Ancestors. He eloquently propounds the view that both circumspect inference and independent analysis could be invoked when grappling with the text, arguing that meanings embedded within the Qur'ānic text are potentially infinite and even Prophetic traditions could be cited to support such a view.¹³⁵ Al-Ghazālī lays store by the assertion that it would be absurd to claim that exegesis was restricted only to drawing from the pool of transmitted and authenticated statements attributed to the Prophet. He notes that the Companions held contradictory and irreconcilable views on exegetical topics, which would seem to be indicative of the relative latitude granted to exegetes. Al-Ghazālī then explains that this would be inconceivable if *tafsīr* were confined to *samā'* (beliefs determined and accepted by revealed convention). Much of his analysis turns on the import of the Qur'ānic term *istinbāṭ* (uncovering meanings) employed in Q. 4:82, and he uses the tradition which speaks of Ibn 'Abbās' being granted wisdom in exegesis to infer by implication that its practice entailed processes of deduction and reasoning.¹³⁶ In his view reprehensible *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* was the corollary of either an insidiously deliberate distortion of scripture for personal and whimsical gain or an ignorant failure to take into account not only the primary value of authenticated dicta and their pertinence to the apparent meaning of the text when engaging in *tafsīr*, but also standard idiomatic features of the language of the Qur'ān. Using an analogy, al-Ghazālī insists that 'anyone who claims to have knowledge of the secrets of the Qur'ān without first consolidating this with an understanding of its evident meanings is like a person who claims to have entered the central part of an abode without having passed through its door.'¹³⁷ Al-Ghazālī's foray into the subject could be seen as a subtle prelude to defending the authority of esoteric treatments of the text, although he takes an unswervingly stern view of those unqualified to practice in the field. The same topic is explored in the commentary of the Andalusian exegete al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1272), who mirrors the case for *tafsīr* set out by al-Ghazālī, categorically dismissing the suggestion that *tafsīr* is somehow restricted to conveying an authoritatively

established closed corpus of Prophetic dicta (*mawqūf ‘alā’l-samā’*) bequeathed by the first generations of scholars; like al-Ghazālī, al-Qurṭubī recognized that the Prophet’s request that Ibn ‘Abbās be granted the gift of interpretation provided incontrovertible proof of its legitimacy for in order to engage in *tafsīr* one needed to be able to infer and deliberate.

It is the Andalusian scholar Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī (d. 745/1344) who mentions in his commentary a conversation he had with one of his contemporaries who suggested to him that attempts to understand the meaning of the Qur’ān must be based on ‘*naql*’ (authenticated statements) sourced from scholars such as Mujāhid, Ṭawūs, ‘Ikrimah, and other notable figures. Abū Ḥayyān retorts that *tafsīr* statements emanating from these luminaries are often intensely at odds and contradictory. He even dismisses the idea that the meaning of every Qur’ānic verse was transmitted from generation to generation back to the Companions, explaining that if such views were accepted, then the achievement of later exegetes in the field of *tafsīr* was in effect not ‘*tafsīr*’; such opinions are dismissed by him as being utterly vain.¹³⁸ The fact that such views were pored over reveals the prolonged nature of the discussions and the entrenched nature of opposition to *tafsīr* among certain scholars.¹³⁹ The debates as presented in the later sources reflect an ongoing tussle with the strands of the earlier debates being appropriated and placed within the context of later discourses and developments. In the early periods the discussions may have been initiated in order to pass judgement on the efficacy of speculative attempts to explicate Qur’ānic exempla along with the text’s allusions to eschatological themes, but over successive periods the discourse was revisited in order to counter excesses and brought to bear on new lines of enquiry, including sectarian, mystical, theological, and even philosophical endeavours.

The corpus of extra-Islamic materials

Historically, attitudes among exegetes towards the interpretive use of the body of dicta referred to as the *isrā’īlīyāt*, a pool of Jewish materials which also included Christian and late antique Near Eastern literary sources, do appear to have been neutral. Such materials were frequently adduced in the literature of *tafsīr* to elucidate and contextualise relevant Qur’ānic exempla, parables, and allusive literary passages deemed common to the religious traditions.¹⁴⁰ Exegetical treatises were replete with these forms of anecdotes with pioneering figures such as Ibn ‘Abbās, Mujāhid, ‘Ikrimah, al-Suddī, Qatāda, Ibn Jurayj, al-Ḍaḥḥāk, al-Kalbī, and Muqātil all typically cited for having exegetically made use of such materials. Many of these reports are traditionally attributed to figures such as Ka’b al-Aḥbār (d. 32/656) and Wahb ibn Munabbih (d. 114/725), who are jointly recognised for their ‘knowledge of the scripture of the People of the Book’; despite the view that they frequently served as nominal pegs upon which unscrupulous narrators

could attach spurious reports. As previously discussed, with regards to *ḥadīth* based materials, theoretical frameworks were already in place for their scrutiny in the sense that it was expected that dicta used for the synthesis of law and dogma should belong to the corpus of reports classed as attaining specific degrees of authenticity.¹⁴¹ But legal theorists did acknowledge that traditions classified as being weak (*daʿīf*) could be cited for their salutary or paraenetic value, although the staunch rejection of the use of materials classed as being deliberately forged or planted (*mawḍūʿ*) remained unquestionable. It was the traditionalist Ibn Ḥanbal who reportedly spoke of applying a stringency with regards to scrutinizing *isnāds* used for the purposes of law (*al-ḥalāl waʾl-ḥarām*), admitting to his being prepared to be more flexible if such materials were used for supererogatory purposes (*faḍāʾil al-aʾmāl*). In the context of the corpora of *isrāʾīlīyāt*, which in certain instances fell outside the compass of *ḥadīth* literature insofar as they were often not ascribed to the Prophet or Companion figures, a greater measure of latitude prevailed with regards to their usage to the extent that the comparative indifference which marked their salutary use in early and classical forms of literature, including *tafsīr*, history, and geography, was systematically challenged only in the later periods. Later commentators were clearly of the view that these particular reports could be used for the purposes of reflection (*iʿtibār*) and illumination (*istishhād*). Indeed, even authors who questioned the reliability of the materials tended to avail themselves of these sources in their commentaries.¹⁴²

Still, the fact that the corpora of *isrāʾīlīyāt* were frequently used in the literature of *tafsīr* for the purposes of attestation stemmed from the very existence of Prophetic traditions which referred to their use. One tradition repeatedly adduced to sanction the practice of utilising such anecdotes for the purposes of reflection is the Prophetic dictum ‘recount the (stories) of the Children of Israel without reproach’ (*ḥaddithū ʿan banī Isrāʾīl wa- lā ḥaraj*).¹⁴³ A further tradition recounted that ‘the People of the Book used to read the Torah in Hebrew, explaining its contents in Arabic to the adherents of Islam, whereupon the Prophet pronounced “believe not the People of the Book nor deny them, but rather say we believe in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to you.”’¹⁴⁴ Interestingly, al-Bukhārī (194–256/810–870) included the tradition within a section of his *ḥadīth* collection which covers the permissibility of using translated materials from the commentaries of the Torah and other sacred books.¹⁴⁵ Erstwhile precedents included the report that in the aftermath of the Yarmūk campaign the prominent Companion ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ (d. 44/664) came into possession of scriptures belonging to the People of the Book and that he used to quote from them.¹⁴⁶ Nevertheless, there is a tendency to identify a marked opposition to the use of *isrāʾīlīyāt* in the works of both Ibn Taymiyya and his pupil Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), who argued that the unregulated resort to such materials had a baleful effect on the quality of the literature of *tafsīr*. The former scholar outlined strict contexts governing the citation of the corpora of *isrāʾīlīyāt*;

while the latter insisted in both his Qur'ānic commentary and his historical compendium that although there was a Prophetic tradition sanctioning the citation of these narratives, the fact that their authenticity was neither confirmed or denied in the traditional sources underlined the need to be mindful of the consequences of relying upon them.¹⁴⁷ Ibn Kathīr contends that such dicta should be used for the purposes of reflection only, stressing that it would be inappropriate to utilise them in instances where authenticated traditions were available as he speaks of there being no usefulness derived from citing materials which had been rejected in the light of Islamic materials.¹⁴⁸ Exegetes, littérateurs and historians, including figures such as Muqātil, Ibn Ishāq (d. 150/767), al-Ṣan'ānī, Ishāq ibn Bishr (d. 206/821), and Ibn Qutayba had already made ample use of the Biblical materials attributed to individuals such as Wahb ibn Munabbih and Ka'b al-Aḥbār; but again, the theoretical reality was that these materials did not impinge upon the synthesis of law or dogma, a reality which accounts for the neutrality adopted towards their continued use in later exegetical works and related literature.¹⁴⁹

The tendency among exegetes to make use of reports deemed questionable but then conclude any ensuing discussions with an emphatic repudiation of their authenticity is a technique employed even in commentaries recognised for favouring a seemingly orthodox approach. The Basran grammarian, al-Zajjāj, who aligned himself with the traditionalist Ḥanbalites, included in his commentary an account of the Prophet king David and the fate of Uriah the Hittite through reference to Q. 38:21–22, which discusses an encounter between David and two angels. Al-Zajjāj provides his reader with all the detail, quoting various extra-Qur'ānic narratives which exegetically supply the pericope with a context, including the reference to David's inadvertently glimpsing Uriah's wife and his decision to send him into battle.¹⁵⁰ Yet having related all the intricate detail, al-Zajjāj exclaims that some exegetes highlighted a statement issued by the fourth caliph 'Alī in which he warned that he would punish anyone insinuating that David had lusted after Bathsheba in a way which casts aspersions against his character. Having recounted the different anecdotes along with the caliph's warning, al-Zajjāj points out that the fact that David had married the fallen Uriah's wife was coincidental, exclaiming that the fourth caliph's intervention corroborated such an explanation. It is worth noting that the same episode is treated with a copiously extended selection of dicta in al-Ṭabarī's work.¹⁵¹ The discussion of controversial reports did allow exegetes to make wider theological points: al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), famed for his Qur'ānic commentary which scrutinised rhetorical dimensions of the Qur'ānic diction, highlights the warning issued by the caliph 'Alī along with a further report in which the controversial telling of this episode is repudiated; he argues that the Qur'ānic depiction of the affair is deliberately allusive; in his view it was despicable to relate dubious reports especially when speaking of Prophets; all of these musings proceed in the

wake of his having detailed the controversial material.¹⁵² The assertion that such reports were false and reprehensible due to their violating the status of Prophethood is also taken up in Ibn al-Jawzī's treatment of the narrative; yet even his *tafsīr* harbours a tendency to include dicta of dubious authenticity of which he would have been aware given the fact that *ḥadīth* criticism was his forte. And similar patterns can be discerned in later works: the Ḥanbalite jurist al-Ras'anī (589–661/1193–1262), who was the author of a renowned commentary entitled *Rumūz al-kunūz fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-'azīz*, methodically recounted every conceivable aspect of the episode before eventually introducing reports which dismiss its veracity.¹⁵³ The inclination to relate all the sundry detail of such episodes in the vein of reflection was instinctively characteristic of most exegetical literature. Such patterns of attestation disclose the paraenetic function of *tafsīr* and the skill with which authors were able to direct and interpret the narrative in ways conducive to the illustration of an underlying perspective or moral imperative. The continued employment of the corpora of *isrā'īlīyāt* by exegetes suggests that their use for the purposes of citation was inherited from the primitive tradition of exegesis to the extent that over subsequent centuries practices and conventions of citation were simply perpetuated by later exegetes; while, undoubtedly, the preoccupation with the popular explication of narratives in general reflected the prominence attached to exempla in the Qur'ān. That exegetes would seek to flesh out and embellish these literary elements was inevitable and the materials of the *isrā'īlīyāt* aided the processes of investigation.

More generally, the importance attached to the sub-genre of *qīṣaṣ* is encapsulated by Ibn Juzayy who speaks of the recounting of the stories of ancient Prophets and other interrelated narratives as being one of the critical branches of knowledge embodied by the Qur'ān.¹⁵⁴ He reached the conclusion that one aspect of the wisdom behind the accentuation of *qīṣaṣ* in the Qur'ān is that moral and illustrative anecdotes provided a continuum for salvation history; and they had the capacity to console and imbibe, although he was aware that a number of exegetes had indulged in relating authentic and inauthentic materials about Prophets in ways which undermined the distinction of their status.¹⁵⁵ Interestingly, Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354/965) the *ḥadīth* expert, did contend that Muqātil used to acquire materials relevant to the Qur'ān from Jewish and Christian sources and it is mentioned that he narrated stories in the main mosque; such reports were clearly meant to underline his unreliability.¹⁵⁶ It is the class of storytellers (*quṣṣāṣ*) who are frequently held responsible for the proliferation of embellished reports, including *isrā'īlīyāt* material; yet criticisms of the storytellers have their roots in the early tradition and continued to be expressed in subsequent historical periods.¹⁵⁷ Ibn Qutayba was particularly scathing of their role as propagators of falsehoods, although, interestingly, he did cite *isrā'īlīyāt* materials in a number of his works.¹⁵⁸ Ibn al-Jawzī's *al-Quṣṣāṣ wa'l-mudhakkirīn*, a work devoted to defining the merits, vices, and etiquette of storytelling for a contemporary

audience, explains that stories regarding the ancient peoples were seldom authenticated, particularly those of the so-called *isrā'īlīyāt*; he even remonstrates that the Islamic faith has a more than ample stock of its own literary materials.¹⁵⁹ However, the inclination to cite materials was rarely tempered even among exegetes who advocated caution. Hence a figure such as al-Ṭabarī, who is renowned for his traditionalist approach to *tafsīr*, makes abundant use of *isrā'īlīyāt* and, more significantly, *ḥadīth* reports which were classed by traditionist scholarship as being weak.¹⁶⁰ Wahb and Ka'b al-Aḥbār, feature prominently as the source of numerous reports throughout al-Ṭabarī's text, although the *tafsīrs* of Muqātil and 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī were already quoting extensively from such sources.¹⁶¹ It is evident that exegetes such as al-Ṭabarī cited such anecdotes and deliberated over them because they were perceptively working within accepted hermeneutical strictures devised within the discipline.¹⁶² One does need to bear in mind the salutary context in which the materials are adduced, although arch traditionalists continued to express objections to their utility.

A passionate defence of the role of *qīṣaṣ* and the use of *isrā'īlīyāt* in the literature of *tafsīr* is provided by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī, the nineteenth-century Damascene exegete in his commentary, *Maḥāsīn al-ta'wīl*. In his view understanding the narrative elements of the Qur'ān (*qīṣaṣ*) formed a critical aspect of Qur'ānic exegesis: he explains that those elements in the text which are not related to *isrā'īlīyāt*, namely, reports focusing on the life of the Prophet, had been fully clarified by traditionist scholars who determined the veracity of the materials they cited; on the other hand, knowledge about narrative elements of the Qur'ān which recounted Biblical elements were acquired by the Pious Ancestors from materials in wide circulation or from converts who were familiar with the original narratives. He concludes that it was unfair to criticise ancient exegetes for ingenuously utilizing these materials especially as the Prophetic tradition, which makes it plain that one could 'recount the (stories) of the Children of Israel without reproach', appeared to provide sanction for their dissemination, irrespective of their status.¹⁶³ There is an admission by al-Qāsimī that among these materials were suspect and forged elements, although he explains that later scholarship was alert to this concern, but in his view this should not militate against their being used for the purposes of reflection and contemplation. Indeed, he even illustrates his point by referring to Ibn Ḥanbal's supposed flexibility on the status of dicta used for paraenetic purposes, suggesting that if this were true, then he would have countenanced greater leniency à propos *qīṣaṣ*. Consisting of excerpted quotations from classical sources, much of al-Qāsimī's discussions are aimed at showing that the Prophet and the Companions were largely receptive to utilising these materials for salutary reflection and attestation. And it is the views, robustly articulated by Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā'ī (d. 885/1480), which are cited by al-Qāsimī to justify their relevance and use.¹⁶⁴

Medieval *tafsīr* legacies

The manner by which exegetes justified the composition of their works, especially as they were often revisiting topics and materials which had already been pored over at length in the previous literature confirms the levels of resourcefulness and ingenuity scholars were able to achieve. The brief introduction to Ibn al-Jawzī's commentary, *Zād al-masīr fī 'ilm al-tafsīr*, mentions his being dismayed by the fact that so many of the works of *tafsīr* were voluminous tomes from which even scholars possessing prolific skills of memorisation would have flinched. In his view works which were less extensive suffered from being too abrupt and failed to achieve their goals; and even medium sized works were of little benefit as they lacked organisation.¹⁶⁵ Ibn al-Jawzī also laments that commentaries often neglected to cover abstruse grammatical points or delved at length on less pressing philological matters and for all these reasons he had set about producing a *tafsīr* which he described as being epigrammatic and uncomplicated; even encouraging his reader to try to commit the work to memory, and boasting that his work was sourced from the finest of *tafsīrs*.¹⁶⁶ Yet despite his various pronouncements, one senses that Ibn al-Jawzī was also taking advantage of the fact that the discipline of *tafsīr* provided a useful forum for expressing his theological views. He was renowned among his fellow Ḥanbalite scholars for holding non-conformist theological positions, and certainly uses the opportunity the genre presents, and the audience it was likely to attract, to exhibit his stance on key points of dogma.¹⁶⁷

The Andalusian exegete Ibn 'Aṭiyya (481–542/1088–1148) declared that his *tafsīr*, which he entitled, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz fī tafsīr al-Kitāb al-'aẓīz*, aimed at achieving comprehensiveness, brevity, and accuracy; he pronounces that he had filled the work with many of his reflective thoughts on *tafsīr*, but avoided the inclusion of gratuitous narrative elements unless they had a distinct correlation with the verses under examination.¹⁶⁸ And he insists that his work was sourced from reliable authorities and did not comprise materials from those who advocated a cryptic reading of the text nor indeed individuals who claimed to possess knowledge of the Qur'ān's esoteric meanings; and therein lies one of the reasons for the composition of his work. The Andalusian scholar Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī was the author of one of most extensive classical treatments devoted to the legal analysis of Qur'ānic verses. The work, entitled *al-Jāmi' lī aḥkām al-Qur'ān wa'l-mubayyin li-mā taḍammāna min al-sunna wa-ayyāt al-Furqān*, did follow in the wake of a number of compositions which focused extensively on the legal discourse of the Qur'ān. The author does explain that works on jurisprudence and *tafsīr* often neglected to identify the authors of the statements which are cited in such compilations and that this was something he would remedy in the *tafsīr*. Al-Qurṭubī explains that his aim was to compose a treatise enshrining pithy discussions on the typical range of conventional exegetical related topics

which he hoped would serve him as an aide-mémoire. Mention is made of the fact that a wealth of Prophetic traditions would be cited to support the discussions, along with statements from the Pious Ancestors and their successors in order to resolve convoluted issues of interpretation. On the issue of the inclusion of narrative materials and historical reports it is suggested that an element of restriction would be applied unless such material was utterly pertinent to the explication of verses for his aim was to elucidate the legal import of Qur'ānic verses. The level of attention key epistemological paradigms continued to attract underlines the continuity of the discussions when it came to justifying *tafsīr*. The commentary has expanded sections on the authoritative basis of *tafsīr* and the perils of its speculative pursuit (*tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*); the doctrine of the seven *ahruf* and its links with *variae lectiones*; the collection of the Qur'ān; the arrangement of the individual chapters and verses of the Qur'ān and sundry orthographical features; the Arabic origin of the vocabulary of the Qur'ān; discussions on the concept of Qur'ānic inimitability; and a section which warns about the spurious nature of reports recounting the virtues of given chapters of the Qur'ān.¹⁶⁹

In the introduction to the commentary composed by al-Baghawī (d. 516/1122), *Ma'ālim al-tanzīl*, a work which was heavily influenced by al-Tha'labī's *tafsīr*, the author mentions that some of his peers requested that he write a work on the subject and thus he produced a text which was neither tediously lengthy nor vapidly curt. Al-Baghawī does humbly admit that while there is nothing new to add to the *tafsīr* legacy of the pious ancestors, it is important to revive and preserve the materials bequeathed by these earlier luminaries. A list of the scholars and works upon which he relied in composing his work is scrupulously detailed, together with the *isnāds* through which he received their materials; among whom are Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, 'Aṭā', al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Qatāda, Abū 'Āliyya, al-Quraṣī, Zayd ibn Aslam, al-Kalbī, al-Ḍaḥḥāk, Muqātil ibn Ḥayyān, Muqātil ibn Sulaymān, and al-Suddī; he also mentions that dicta relating to the creation stories were acquired from Wahb ibn Munabbih and Muḥammad ibn Ishāq; and also listed are the works on *variae lectiones* used for his commentary. Having described al-Baghawī's *tafsīr* as being the finest and most eminent of writings in its field, and heaped lavish praise on its author, 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm, otherwise known by the sobriquet, al-Khāzin (d. 725/1324), based his *tafsīr*, which he called *Lubāb al-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī al-tanzīl*, on a select garnering of the contents of al-Baghawī's *tafsīr*, augmenting it with material he gleaned from other seminal works. He explains that his role as the work's author did not go beyond transmitting and selecting from its contents, avoiding prolixity and verbosity. Furthermore, he mentions omitting the lengthy *isnāds* that accompany traditions, while also devising a key which could be used to identify the *ḥadīth* collectors from which the traditions cited in the work emanated, although he mentions that the space freed up by the omission of *isnāds* was propitiously used to furnish a philological commentary on the language of

the traditions. Despite the contention that he was merely a compiler, al-Khāzin's impressive ability to coordinate, supplement, and distil al-Baghawī's materials, confirms not only his proficiency as a writer, but also the depth of his understanding of classical *tafsīr* discourses. The idea of condensing, abridging, and augmenting previous scholarship is likewise evident in the *tafsīr* of 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad al-Nasafī (d. 710/1310), who proclaimed that his *tafsīr*, entitled *Madārik al-tanzīl wa-ḥaqā'iq al-ta'wīl*, was composed to provide a medium sized commentary, encompassing aspects of grammar, *variae lectiones*, and the subtleties of the rhetorical sciences. He explains that the work was critically informed by the doctrinal positions of *Ahl al-Sunna* and free from the untruth of innovators, adding that it is neither tediously lengthy nor defectively brief, a point which echoes the remarks made in the introduction to the work of Ibn al-Jawzī.¹⁷⁰ Enhancement and expansion provided the backdrop for the *tafsīr* composed by 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Tha'ālibī (786–875/1384–1470), who revealed that his work, which took the title *al-Jawāhir al-ḥisān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, was an abridged text set around the contents of Ibn 'Aṭīyya's commentary, being supplemented with an 'abundance of useful materials derived from the works of leading reliable authorities.' He proudly mentions having consulted over one hundred books composed by dependable authors, citing in his work their exact words as opposed to conveying the gist of their exegetical thoughts, out of fear of making errors.¹⁷¹ He even speaks of having employed a system of referencing to differentiate his own thoughts from the statements of the authors he is quoting. One can only admire the precision and determination which individuals brought to the study of *tafsīr*, but with each writer rests an attempt to present a novel synthesis of the materials of exegesis, although one also needs to bear in mind that individual authors were catering for different audiences and in many ways the inherited body of literature was being vivified to reflect this reality.

One work which has been much vaunted for its unrivalled expertise in the field of rhetorical analysis is the commentary of al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl wa-'uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta'wīl*. Its treatment of the rhetorical and stylistic elements of the Qur'ān set the benchmark for literary analyses of the text, although there were antecedents in the field from which he was able to draw inspiration, including the work entitled *Kitāb al-jāmi' fī 'ilm al-Qur'ān* composed by the Baṣran grammarian al-Rummānī.¹⁷² Despite the fact that al-Zamakhsharī's affiliation with the Mu'tazilites is repeatedly denounced, the distinction and scale of expertise his work accomplished led to its being consistently adduced by exegetes of all theological persuasions. It was even the subject of a commentary which set about expunging points of dogma expressed in the work yet deemed contentious within traditionalist circles.¹⁷³ In his prefatory remarks al-Zamakhsharī argued that without a thorough grounding in the rhetorical sciences of *'ilm al-ma'ānī* and *'ilm al-bayān*, the literary splendour of the Qur'ān cannot be appreciated; he even confesses that his being able to enlighten his Mu'tazilite cohorts

when interpreting a verse of the Qur'ān with some of its hidden realities positively enchanted them to the extent that they suggested he compose a work on the subject.¹⁷⁴ Now, while it is important to note that al-Zamakhsharī's text belongs to the wider body of *tafsīr* literature, it is significant in the context of modern scholarship for it was prominent among the available sources which informed earlier academic studies of the history and development of *tafsīr*. The importance of this text is discussed at length by the Andalusian scholar Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī in his voluminous commentary of the Qur'ān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*. Abū Ḥayyān, who lectured for a while in Egypt, provides one of the most detailed introductions to the discipline of *tafsīr* in which he sets out not only its avid allure, but also the fact that having reflected upon the existing literature, in his work he would endeavour to condense the drawn out; bring resolution to the indistinct; confine the unrestricted; unlock the locked; assemble the dispersed; and extract materials that he felt were the finest. He reveals that he would be including his own contemplative reflections which were wrought from the science of rhetoric.¹⁷⁵ In a section of the introduction devoted to fleshing out his work's strategy, Abū Ḥayyān mentions that he will allude briefly to the mystical musings of the *ahl-al-taṣawwuf*, should this be deemed appropriate to the lexical significance of a word, albeit eschewing some of the meanings they infer of words; and that this was also the case for 'sectarian' exegesis of the text, which he takes the opportunity to censure. He does make a point of emphasising that exegetical works were inundated with unnecessary grammatical, legal, and theological proofs. He also refers to these texts' tendency to include unauthenticated materials relating to the occasions of revelation and Prophetic dicta on the virtues of the Qur'ān; inappropriate tales; and Biblical accounts which have no place in the works of *tafsīr*.

Again, the idea of revisiting the existing legacy of literature in the context of resolution and revision across the gamut of exegetical topics supplied later authors with new avenues and territory within which they could situate and develop their works. While al-Zamakhsharī excelled in his treatment of the rhetorical areas of the Qur'ān's language, no author in the field of *tafsīr* was able to emulate the intrepid command, insight, and meticulousness brought by Abū Ḥayyān to the study of the text's grammatical features. Although in accentuating the syntactical and the rhetorical elements of the Qur'ān's language, he never compromised coverage of the other conventional aspects of *tafsīr*, including narrative, and even points of theology and law; and, like so many of his fellow exegetes, often included explanatory glosses relating to Qur'ānic exempla, whose reliability he had initially questioned. Also focusing on grammar and rhetoric was the work of the Egyptian based Syrian exegete al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī (d. 756/1355), a pupil of Abū Ḥayyān, who described his *tafsīr* as being the product of a lifetime of dedicated scholarship.¹⁷⁶ Five sub-sciences are identified by al-Samīn as being critical to comprehending the Qur'ān's meaning and purpose, and these include syntax, morphology,

philology, *‘ilm al-ma‘ānī* and *‘ilm al-bayān*. According to al-Samīn, a percipient gauging of the Qur’ān’s meaning could be provided only by an approach which proportionately addressed the text through these disciplines. His work eschewed any sustained discussion of either exempla or narrative. Perhaps one of the most structurally innovative formats for the presentation of the materials of *tafsīr* was achieved in the commentary entitled *Baṣā’ir dhawī’l-tamyīz fī laṭā’if al-Kitāb al-‘āzīz*, which was composed by the distinguished philologist al-Fīrūzābādī (729–817/1327–1414). His organisational skills as a lexicographer are intuitively manifest in the work which effortlessly integrates the traditional stock themes of *tafsīr* with an extensive range of nuanced intentions (*maqāsid*) exegetically gleaned from the Qur’ān.¹⁷⁷

The monumental *tafsīr* entitled *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, composed by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (504–606/1110–1209), a philosopher, Ash‘arite theologian, and legal theorist, combines a forensic treatment of the Qur’ān through reference to the traditional themes of exegesis together with an engaged reading of the text’s philosophical, theological, legal, and literary dimensions. Accordingly, the work is an invaluable source preserving many of the critical developments taking place within medieval Islamic intellectual thought. Al-Rāzī’s impressive marshalling of the intricate exegetical debates and discussions is evident throughout the commentary. However some critics claimed that his work contained everything other than *tafsīr*.¹⁷⁸ This somewhat strident remark was more a criticism of the theological inclinations of the author and his use of *tafsīr* to propound rational premises informed by his philosophical theology rather than a reflection of the work’s contents and its unrivalled contribution to the genre, despite the fact that his presentation of points of discussion is often labyrinthine and digressive.¹⁷⁹ Some of al-Rāzī’s staunchest defenders conceded that though his *tafsīr* was replete with informative discussions, it did include materials which were deemed ‘superfluous’ and ‘abstruse’. Nizām al-Dīn al-Naysābūrī (d. 728/1327) makes this very point in his *tafsīr*, *Gharā’ib al-Qur’ān wa-raghā’ib al-Furqān*, mentioning in his introduction that he was asked to compose a work which brought together the essentials on the subject, based on reliably transmitted materials and the statements of trustworthy scholars.¹⁸⁰ Having accepted the request and humbly acknowledged his own shortcomings, al-Naysābūrī then proceeds to acknowledge the quality of al-Rāzī’s *tafsīr*, but he also singles out some of its less appealing features. He mentions that his goal was to flesh out the gist of the explanations offered by al-Rāzī, refining them with essential subtleties which he derived from al-Zamakhsharī’s *al-Kashshāf* and other works; al-Naysābūrī professes the fact that he would be complementing the materials with his own ‘worn offerings’, although to his credit, he is not slavishly repeating the theoretical deliberations of al-Rāzī, which are often postulating key legal, theological, and philosophical premises, but rather weighing up and contextualising them, addressing objections and questions which are raised in their regard. Impressively, the discussions relevant to al-Rāzī’s *tafsīr* are embedded

in the much broader narrative of al-Naysābūrī's work, which is grappling with a host of other exegetical topics, including esoteric Šūfī *tafsīr*. The innovative format of themes through which al-Naysābūrī structured his presentation of the individual chapters betokens the uniqueness of his work; and having completed his exegesis of the final chapter, al-Naysābūrī provides his reader with a conspectus of what the work has attempted to achieve. The dynamic of revising, reviewing, complementing, abbreviating, and synthesising the contents of existing commentaries served as a catalyst for exegetical endeavour. And, inevitably, there is also the question of catering for audiences: it is not infrequent that authors will mention the need to make the existing corpora of exegetical literature more accessible.

Shī'ism and *tafsīr*

The range of commentaries composed by Shī'ite luminaries confirms the venerated status the genre of *tafsīr* enjoyed within Shī'ism. Hierarchies of religious authority within Twelver Shī'ism meant that dicta sourced from the designated *imāms* were deemed exclusively authoritative for the interpretation of the Qur'ān, echoing the manner by which statements ascribed to the *imāms* played a primary role in the interpretation of law and the resolution of belief and ritual.¹⁸¹ Having accentuating the existence of outer and inner meanings of the text, the *imām* was seen as being invested by God with in-depth knowledge of the Qur'ān.¹⁸² Among the early Shī'ite commentaries is the work known as *Tafsīr al-ʿAskarī*, which is attributed to the eleventh Imām Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī al-Askarī (d. 260/873–4).¹⁸³ It is described as 'not being a systematic commentary' but rather one which combines the presentation of traditional reports in conjunction with selected verses of the Qur'ān.¹⁸⁴ And it is suggested that although the ascription of the work to al-ʿAskarī cannot be 'decisively answered', it was composed in his 'time and place.' Other pre-Buwayhid Shī'ite texts which have survived include the *tafsīr* attributed to Furāt ibn Furāt ibn Ibrāhīm al-Kūfī (d. c. fourth/century); *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, which was authored by Abū'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, who lived between the third and fourth centuries; a *tafsīr* composed by Abū'l-Naḍr Muḥammad ibn Masʿūd al-ʿAyyāshī of Samarqand, who was a contemporary of both Furāt and al-Qummī; and the *tafsīr* of Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nu'mānī (d. 360/971).¹⁸⁵ These are all texts which adopted a selective treatment of Qur'ānic verses through the attestation of traditions, with general points on the authority of the *imām* and institutions such as *walāyat* (alliance and friendship) being highlighted in the discussions.¹⁸⁶ The work of Abū Ja'far al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067), *al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, adopts an entirely different approach. He begins his work by stating that none of his Shī'ite predecessors and contemporaries had devoted a commentary to covering the entire text of the Qur'ān and it was filling this lacuna which inspired him to write his commentary, remarking that in previous

works exegetical materials in the form of dicta were simply collated within the body of *ḥadīth* collections. Al-Ṭūsī briefly mentions some of the shortcomings of the existing literature: al-Ṭabarī was prolix and protracted; al-Zajjāj and al-Farrā' were fixated on grammar and syntax; al-Mufaḍḍal ibn Salama (d. 290/902), a transmitter of al-Farrā''s *Ma'ānī*, focused on philology; Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī (d. 303/915) was interested only in the theological interpretation of the text. Against the background of these works, al-Ṭūsī's intended aim was to produce an abridged but all-inclusive commentary which encompassed all the sciences (*funūn*) of the Qur'ān.¹⁸⁷ Technical issues such as the legitimacy of pursuing *tafsīr* and the need to avoid the resort to unfettered personal reasoning; the doctrine of the Qur'ān being revealed in one mode as opposed to seven; definitions of *mutashābih* and *muḥkam*; the concept of abrogation; and the use of profane poetry for exegetical purposes are all reflected upon in his introduction, demonstrating common theoretical concerns which featured in the works of Sunnī and Shī'ite scholars.

In a section introducing discussions deemed requisite to the study of *tafsīr*, al-Ṭūsī alludes to the notion of *tahrīf* (falsification), which he describes as being unseemly, insisting that the idea that there were additions or omissions with regards to the text of the Qur'ān was a contravention of the accepted consensus among Muslims; and he mentions that this was a position supported by the eminent al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044).¹⁸⁸ It has been pointed out that prior to the advent of the Buwayhids in the fourth/tenth century, a Shī'ite dynasty which enjoyed political dominance under the auspices of the ruling 'Abbāsīd caliphate, there was a tendency within Shī'ism to dispute aspects of the canonical authority of the codex established by the third caliph 'Uthmān.¹⁸⁹ The historical depth and nature of the disputes about canon within Shī'ism remain vague as the late provenance of the available sources which preserve the discussions makes it difficult to determine the genuine extent of the actual arguments and the impact such a doctrine would have had upon the actual development of Shī'ite exegesis.¹⁹⁰ Nevertheless, it is accepted that the idea of *tahrīf* or falsification, namely that the original version of the Qur'ān had been corrupted or tampered with to conceal the rights of the *imāms*, was rife among the more extremist factions.¹⁹¹ Within mainstream Shī'ism, views on the notion of falsification are said to have subsided under the Buwayhids, although distinguished luminaries of Twelver Shī'ism, such as Ibn Bābawayhi (d. 381/991), al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022), and al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā categorically dismissed the notion of *tahrīf*.

A second influential post-Buwayhid text was the commentary entitled *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* composed by Shaykh al-Faḍl ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭabrisī (d. 548/1154). The work begins with an elaborate summary of the illustrious virtues of the study of the Qur'ān, observing that it serves as the basis of all sciences.¹⁹² In the work the point is made that Shī'ite scholarship on *tafsīr* had largely focused on producing abbreviated works based on traditionally transmitted dicta, without delving into the meanings

and profundities of the text, with the exception of al-Ṭūsī, whose commentary would serve as an 'exemplar' from which al-Ṭabrisī would draw in compiling his work. However, despite heaping praise on al-Ṭūsī's work, he does identify some of its shortcomings with regards to the treatment of grammatical topics. Interestingly, al-Ṭabrisī mentions that in his youth he had earnestly yearned to write a commentary on the Qur'ān, but that it was not until he reached the ripe old age of sixty, and, following a request from a notable elder, and much circumspect reflection, that he finally set about compiling the work, placing optimum emphasis on the summation, refinement, and presentation of the sciences and branches of knowledge associated with the discipline of *tafsīr*. He asserts that the work would explore the corpus of *variae lectiones* with regards to syntax, philology, grammatical complexity, ambiguity, meaning, and aspect; topics such as revelation, exempla, narrative, and law are also covered in the work and al-Ṭabrisī specifies that the commentary would address issues raised by the Qur'ān's detractors but that he would also take the opportunity to draw attention to Shī'ite doctrines in terms of principles of faith and subsidiary matters, being both concise and fair in the process. His introduction deals with the enumeration of Qur'ānic verses and its relevance; the scholarly pedigree of the classes of Qur'ān readers; distinctions between the technical import of *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*; the etymology of the word Qur'ān and the names used to divide its chapters; general points on the Qur'ān's sciences, in which he takes the opportunity to dismiss the notion of *taḥrīf*, replicating al-Ṭūsī's arguments; and there are sections on the virtues of the Qur'ān and the merits of its recitation.¹⁹³ His arrangement of the text is inspired as it broaches the exegesis of verses through isolated stock themes such as philology, grammar, meaning, the grammatical rationale of readings (*ḥujja*), narrative, and circumstances of revelation.

The works of al-Ṭūsī and al-Ṭabrisī were important sources for later Shī'ite commentators, who drew from these commentaries along with exegetical sources which featured in the pre-Buwayhid materials. An excellent indicator of the range of attitudes among later Twelver scholars can be found in the work of al-Baḥrānī (flor. 11th/18th century), *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, who was at pains to identify distinctions with regards to authority between Sunnī *tafsīr* and the Shī'ite materials.¹⁹⁴ Al-Baḥrānī stressed the primacy of *Ahl al-Bayt* as the only genuine authorities on *tafsīr*, contending that proper exegesis of the text could emanate only from these figures as invested in them was divinely revealed knowledge of the Book; he explains that this was not to imply that rational subjects such as grammar and rhetoric were irrelevant to *tafsīr*, but rather it is through the *imāms* that such knowledge formally issued.¹⁹⁵ He does use the writings of numerous Shī'ite authorities, including figures such as Ibn Bābawayhi, al-Ṭūsī and al-ʿĀyyāshī, and speaks of his being prepared to refer to Sunnī materials if they were in concord with the transmissions of *Ahl al-Bayt* or comprised materials which praise them.¹⁹⁶ Much earlier, a similar range of exegetical issues and concerns was examined with vigour in the medieval Qur'ānic

commentaries of figures such as Ḥaydar Āmulī (719–787/1319–1385), the author of the celebrated *al-Muḥīṭ al-a‘ẓam wa’l-baḥr al-khiḍamm*, and other classical Shī‘ite exegetes; moreover, the sum and substance of early and medieval exegetical thought are appraised and expounded upon in the work of al-Ṭabāṭabā‘ī, *Al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān*. And a defence of Shī‘ite hermeneutical principles is fully elaborated upon in the works of contemporary writers such as Abū’l-Qāsim al-Khū‘ī, the author of *al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān*.¹⁹⁷

Within the Ismā‘īlī (Seveners) branch of Shī‘ism, exegesis of the Qur’ān, as pursued through reference to an elaborate process of *ta’wīl*, was devoted to uncovering the esoteric senses of the text’s meaning, which also remained the exclusive preserve of the legitimate *imāms*. Ismā‘īlīs embraced a cyclical interpretation of history and religion within which the designated *imāms* were viewed as being endowed with knowledge of the Qur’ān’s inner purport and meaning insofar as each *imām* served as the annunciator of the Qur’ān (*nāṭiq al-Qur’ān*). Within this interpretive framework, it was posited that an *imām* is always present across the ages to provide knowledge of the inner aspect of the Qur’ān, even being in a position to renew and bring up to date its interpretation.¹⁹⁸ The more traditional forms of exegesis or *tafsīr* were entirely immaterial to the overriding procedure of Ismā‘īlī *ta’wīl*, which was concerned principally with the text’s hidden meanings and truths (*ḥaqā’iq*) as uncovered and given definition by the *imāms*. The Sunnī traditional sources were scathing of the forms of esoteric *tafsīr* associated with Ismā‘īlism with the view repeatedly expressed that such forms of esoteric *tafsīr* had the potential to lead to the promotion of antinomianism and a relegation of the evident dimensions of the sacred text; such charges were categorically dismissed in the Ismā‘īlī sources.¹⁹⁹ Prominent Ismā‘īlī *ta’wīl* literature included the *Kitāb al-kashf*, which is ascribed to the Yemeni missionary Maṣṣūr al-Yaman (d. 302/914) and the writings of the influential Fāṭimid jurist al-Qāḍī al-Nu‘mān (d. 363/974), whose works include *Asās al-ta’wīl*, *Da‘ā’im al-Islām*, and *Ta’wīl al-da‘ā’im*. Selective points germane to esoteric *ta’wīl* are touched upon by Abū Ḥatim al-Rāzī (d. 322/934) in his *Kitāb a‘lām al-nubuwwa*, which comprises a refutation of the skeptic Abū Bakr al-Rāzī.²⁰⁰ Again, these are not works ostensibly concerned with the conventional exoteric (*ẓāhīrī*) aspects of the Qur’ān, but rather they set about situating its esoteric explication within Ismā‘īlī conceptual edifices. Similarly, Ismā‘īlī hermeneutical models were elaborate and intricate, fusing Neoplatonic and spiritual concepts. Significantly, distinct Ismā‘īlī leanings have been detected in the works of the Ash‘arite heresiographer ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī (479–548/1086–1153) and yet his commentary on the Qur’ān, entitled *Maḥfūẓ al-asrār wa-maṣābīḥ al-abrār*, also evinces a creative synthesis of traditional, mystical, and Ismā‘īlī hermeneutics, drawing from an eclectic body of sources. It is this fact which makes the work wholly exceptional for while elements of Ismā‘īlī influences are tangible in the *tafsīr*, al-Shahrastānī continues to seek to locate a profound and vigorous relevance for the Sunnī materials.²⁰¹

Aspects of Šūfī exegesis

While the more common forms of *tafsīr* were essentially seen as embodying a search for the exoteric or apparent (*ẓāhir*) meaning of the text, Šūfī exegesis was constellated around unravelling the hidden or concealed (*bāṭin*) aspects of the Qur'ān's meaning with such forms of exegesis taking the label *tafsīr al-ishārī* (*tafsīr via allusions*).²⁰² In the same way that classical *tafsīr* scholarship outlined an historical pedigree for its tradition of *tafsīr*, Šūfī exegesis, which generated a significant number of influential commentaries, was traced back to earlier eponyms identified as key contributors to its discourse.²⁰³ Among the texts which are thought to preserve the earliest expressions of exegesis through allusion is the *tafsīr* of Ja'far al-Šādiq (d. 148/765), which deals with a selection of passages of the Qur'ān. It has been argued that al-Šādiq's text reflects Šūfī mystical and spiritual ideas which were probably circulating during the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries, although the treatise was preserved within a larger work entitled *Ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr*, which was collated by 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), a renowned Šūfī personality and scholar of traditions.²⁰⁴ Still, the conceptual sophistication of allusive *tafsīr* is evident in the commentary of Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896), a work which serves as one of the most important sources for the historical development of ideas and concepts within esoteric *tafsīr*. Significant within Šūfī conceptions of *tafsīr* is the understanding that the unveiling of the text's numinous meanings and subtleties along with its hidden secrets and unique sciences is the exclusive privilege of those whose hearts are rendered pure through acts of personal piety and devoted religiosity.

Notably, the basis of the methods by which Šūfis elicit meanings from the Qur'ān is explained in the text of the celebrated mystic Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj al-Ṭūsī (d. 378/988), who devotes a section of his influential *Kitāb al-luma'* to Šūfī esoteric exegesis. Referring to the fundamentals of *'ilm al-ishāra*, Abū Naṣr intimates that God endows Šūfis with knowledge of the sacred text by virtue of their concomitant adherence to both the *ẓāhir* (internal) and *bāṭin* (external) aspects of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic teachings; he contends that such knowledge would otherwise have remained concealed from them. The examples of *ishārī* interpretation comprised in the *Luma'*, which are attributed to early mystic luminaries, typify the delicate manner by which simple Šūfī concepts and axioms were exquisitely situated within the matrices of Qur'ānic discourse. The nexus between such concepts and the Qur'ān is significant for debates about the origin of mystical constructs, particularly given the contention that nascent mystical ideas were inspired by and derived from a Qur'ānic substrate. Interestingly, the mystic Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (d. 386/966) spoke of binary levels of meaning which permeated the Qur'ān: they included the general and the specific; the *muḥkam* and the *mutashābih*; and the exoteric as well as the esoteric.²⁰⁵ A fine example of the literary efflorescence of Šūfī *tafsīr* in which traditional exegetical themes are meticulously entwined with

mystical and theological constructs is provided in the commentary entitled *Laṭā'if al-ishārāt*, which was composed by the mystic luminary 'Abd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī (376–465/986–1072).²⁰⁶ Again, within such treatments there is never an attempt to attenuate the importance of the exoteric aspect of the Qur'ān. Although traditionalist literature does caution against some of the excesses of *tafsīr al-ishārāt*, it is apparent that it was not entirely censured as indeed a not insignificant number of scholars were prepared to mount eloquent defences of its legitimacy.²⁰⁷ With regards to the work of al-Sulamī, it covers the exegesis of some six-hundred verses of the Qur'ān, introducing mystical deliberations attributed to figures such as Ja'far al-Šādiq, Sahl al-Tustarī, Ibn 'Aṭā' al-Adamī (d. 309/922), Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī (d. 261/874), and al-Shiblī (247–334/861–948). Al-Sulamī's work was criticized by a number of scholars: the exegete al-Wāḥidī is reported to have disavowed al-Sulamī for composing his *tafsīr* and similar denunciations appear in later literature, although his work had its defenders.²⁰⁸ Ibn Juzayy argued in the introduction to his commentary that *tafsīr al-taṣawwuf* constituted a valid dimension of exegesis, referring to its connection with the Qur'ān on account of the gnostic teachings, spiritual conditioning, and purification of the soul which issue from it. He is keen to stress that Šūfīs had excelled when engaging in Qur'ānic exegesis and had by virtue of the radiance of their astuteness, stood at the threshold of the essence of the Qur'ān's esoteric meanings; but he also admits that there were individuals who immersed themselves in cryptic matters and sought meanings for the text which were uncorroborated by the Arabic language. Referring to al-Sulamī's *tafsīr*, which he notes had been described by some scholars as full of 'falsehoods', he comments that it is fairer to label it as comprising both 'truths and falsehoods'.²⁰⁹ With regards to his own *tafsīr*, Ibn Juzayy pronounces that he would be relating only that which was considered fine of the *ishārāt al-Šūfiyya*, referring to his discussing twelve 'states' of *taṣawwuf* which were enshrined in the Qur'ān.

The figure whose work definitively epitomised the sophistication brought to bear in Šūfī *tafsīr* is without doubt the Andalusian mystic Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī (d. 638/1240).²¹⁰ Not only is his exegesis informed by the profundity of his theosophical thought, but also it is embedded in an intensely rich literary narrative. In the same way that scholars who produced conventional commentaries elucidated, refined, and developed the works of previous authors, comparable patterns of scholarship can be discerned in the literature devoted to *tafsīr ishārāt*. Thus for example, Rashīd al-Dīn al-Maybudī (d. c. 520/1126) in his *Kashf al-asrār wa-'uddat al-abrār*, built on the Qur'ān commentary of 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Anṣārī al-Harawī (d. 481/1089), enhancing the format of his work while also substantially augmenting its content with materials sourced from early cynosures of Šūfī *tafsīr*; other writers such as Ruzbihān Baqlī (d. 606/1209), the author of *'Arā'is al-bayān fī ḥaqā'iq al-Qur'ān*, fused their highly imaginative esoterical explanations with those of early luminaries.

And this is also true of the work of al-Simnānī (d. 736/1336), demonstrating how later students took up the cudgels of previous scholarship.²¹¹ The commentaries composed by Ṣaḍr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274) and ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī (d. 730/1329–30) provided the mystical thoughts of Ibn ‘Arabī with a decidedly philosophical dimension.

Al-Kāshānī wrote a commentary on Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* along with his own *tafsīr*, *Ta’wīlāt al-Qur’ān*. In the latter text he speaks of his experiencing revelational moments during which the meanings of individual verses were unveiled to him, although he describes such phenomena as being ephemeral insofar as he had neither the capacity or power to control or detail such moments. Intriguingly, the experience together with its significance is contextualised by al-Kāshānī through reference to the Prophetic tradition which identifies every revealed verse of the Qur’ān as having a *ẓahr* and *baṭn* (outer and inner aspects); and that every one of its single letters (*ḥarf*) has a specified boundary (*ḥadd*), which in turn has its point of ascent (*maṭla’*); the proponents of esoteric *tafsīr* attached great importance to this Prophetic dictum, a tradition which figures such as Ja‘far al-Šādiq, al-Tustarī, al-Sulamī adduced in their respective works.²¹² Al-Kāshānī reveals that the preoccupation with the exterior dimensions of the Qur’ān was the remit of conventional *tafsīr*, whereas *ta’wīl* focused on uncovering the interior. Placing esoteric *tafsīr* within the tenor of the aforementioned Prophetic tradition, al-Kāshānī points out that the boundary is where the comprehension of meanings intersects and transpires, while the point of ascent provides the locus which brings one before the presence of the sovereign and all knowing Being. Extravagant language, mystical imagery, and spiritual ecstasy are characteristically blended throughout al-Kāshānī’s work, although inherent in his reflections is the acceptance that levels and states of religious piety had a direct bearing on the quality of the inspired exegetical experience. He is mindful to point out that his exegetical thoughts would reflect upon the veiled interior meanings and not the exterior ones associated with conventional *tafsīr*, pensively referring to the tradition which censures the whimsical interpretation of the Qur’ān, thereby situating his own efforts within the realm of permissible *ta’wīl*. Defenders of allusive exegesis assiduously clarified that such forms of esoteric exegesis were never meant to diminish the significance of the more conventional forms of *tafsīr*. Indeed, the nineteenth-century Iraqi exegete al-Alūsī explained in the introduction to his own voluminous commentary, *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, in which the legitimacy of *tafsīr al-ishārī* is defended, that the great Šūfī scholars insisted that the perfection of the *tafsīr al-zāhir* was a prerequisite for the pursuit of the inner aspects of exegesis.²¹³ And his work was a formidable attempt to forge the disparate strands of *tafsīr al-ishārī* into a cohesive whole. The genre of Šūfī Qur’ānic commentaries confirms both the variety and richness achieved within the literature of *tafsīr*.

Trajectories of *tafsīr literature*: exegetical tracts and treatises

The authorship of individual treatises and tracts which expanded upon aspects of specific exegetical themes or concepts addressed within the classical Qur'ānic commentaries was also the subject of intense activity. For example, the topic of abrogation (*naskh*) was the focus of a number of influential works: Abū 'Ubayd, the distinguished Kufan philologist was the author of a text on abrogation and indeed al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857) devoted a section of his renowned *Kitāb fahm al-Qur'ān* to discussing the phenomenon. Abū Ja'far al-Naḥḥās, 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037), Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Ibn Ḥazm (384–456/994–1064), Ibn al-'Arabī al-Mu'āfirī (d. 543/1148), and Ibn al-Jawzī were the authors of texts which pored over and revisited discussions on Qur'ānic abrogation. Even the very deliberations on the subject of *naskh* ascribed to earlier luminaries such as al-Zuhrī (d. 124/741) and Qatāda were collated by students and transmitters and presented in the form of unique treatises.²¹⁴ Writers also turned their attention to the subject of the circumstances of revelation, *asbāb al-nuzūl*, which like *naskh*, was already treated within the confines of larger commentaries. 'Alī ibn al-Madīnī (161–234/777–848), who was renowned as al-Bukhārī's teacher, is credited with having written a text on *asbāb al-nuzūl*. One of the most popular works of the sub-genre was the treatise composed by al-Wāḥidī. Interestingly, Abū Ḥayyān was particularly critical of al-Wāḥidī, whom he accused of including mostly inauthentic materials in the work. Other texts devoted to the *asbāb al-nuzūl* included texts authored by Ibn Muṭarrif al-Andalusī (d. 402/1011), Ibn al-Jawzī, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (773–852/1371–1448) and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī.²¹⁵

Muqātil ibn Sulaymān's *al-Wujūh wa'l-naẓā'ir* seems to have inspired a number of treatises which set about augmenting the incidences of polysemy defined by the author. The work entitled *Taḥṣīl naẓā'ir al-Qur'ān* was composed by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. 320/932) and in the text he questioned some of the assumptions used to define this phenomenon.²¹⁶ Other notable treatises included the work of Abū Hilāl al-'Askarī (d. 395/1005) and a comprehensive treatment entitled *al-Wujūh wa'l-naẓā'ir li-alfāẓ Kitāb illāh al-'azīz* compiled by al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Dāmighānī (d. 478/1085), who begins his text by referring to the work of Muqātil and other writers before expressing his disappointment that they had omitted so many lexical items relevant to the subject and he was going to address this oversight in his work.²¹⁷ The concept of the inimitability of the Qur'ān was the subject of a number of important works: al-Khaṭṭābī (319–388/930–998), al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013), al-Rummānī, 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078), Ibn al-Naḳīb (d. 698/1298), and Kamāl al-Dīn al-Zamlakānī (d. 727/1326), were the authors of treatises which brought together and refined the various strands of thought connected with the doctrine of *i'jāz*, a topic which was discussed within the framework of the larger

Qur'ānic commentaries. Literary aspects of the Qur'ānic expression were also tackled in specialised treatises such as al-Sharīf al-Raḍī's seminal *Talḥkīṣ al-bayān fī majāzāt al-Qur'ān*, which analysed the incidence of metaphor (*majāz*) throughout the Qur'ān; *al-Jumān fī tashbīhāt al-Qur'ān* authored by Ibn Nāqiyā al-Baghdādī (410–485/1019–1092) investigated the use of similes and metaphors in the Qur'ān, while the theme of metaphor in the Qur'ān formed the backdrop to al-'Izz ibn 'Abd al-Salām's key study.²¹⁸ Other specific themes within *tafsīr* which attracted separate treatises included the subject of *mutashābihāt al-Qur'ān*, which inspired a large number of philological as well as theological works, including the *Mutashābih al-Qur'ān* of the Mu'tazilite scholar 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), and the *Milāk al-ta'wīl al-qāṭi' bi-dhawī al-ilḥād wa'l-ta'īl fī tawjīh mutashābih al-laḥẓ min ayy al-tanzīl* authored by Ibn al-Zubayr al-Thaqafī (627–8/708/1230–1308).²¹⁹ Likewise, the area of the legal discourse of the Qur'ān was a subject to which treatises were devoted by prominent authors including al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321/933), Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d. 370/981), al-Kiyā al-Harrāsī (d. 504/1110), Ibn al-'Arabī, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥīm ibn Faras (d. 597/1200), and al-Qurṭubī.²²⁰ The objective of the *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* works was to ruminate over the legal implications and rationale of specific classes of verses in the Qur'ān. Notwithstanding the contention that such areas of scholarship were appropriated from varied and often unconnected disciplines of learning which were secondary to the core interests of *tafsīr* scholarship, the fact remains that they were inspired by an engagement with the text of scripture and became integral elements of the discourses supported and nurtured within *tafsīr* commentaries.

Following on from the compilations of figures such as Sufyān al-Thawrī and al-Ṣan'ānī, *ḥadīth* scholars such as al-Bukhārī and al-Tirmidhī included in their collections sections which brought together traditions with an exegetical context or connection. Indeed, such was the wide-ranging nature of the section on *tafsīr* in the collection of the traditionist al-Nasā'ī (d. 303/915), *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, that it was published as an independent text.²²¹ Upon closer examination it is evident that the work is essentially a compendium of Prophetic and Companion traditions which are arranged around the chapters of the Qur'ān, engaging with disparate aspects of its content, whether in the form of an oblique reference to actual verses, which have little to do with their explication, or aspects of their meaning and chronological provenance; the level of normative commentary included by the compiler is minimal. Within the traditionalist camp, such approaches to exegesis, in which scholars were scrupulously recounting the available corpus of traditions, were commended, although the inference that such works were exclusively replete with Prophetic and Companion statements is belied by the fact that such compositions include a variety of materials, many of which are attributed to exegetes from the post-Prophetic periods, including al-Suddī, 'Ikrima, al-Ḍaḥḥāk, al-Kalbī, Ibn Ishāq, and Ibn Jurayj.

The traditionist Ibn Abī Ḥātim (240–327/854–938) explained in the introduction to his *ḥadīth* based *tafsīr* that he was asked by a number of his students to produce an abridged work which comprised only those traditions whose chains of authority were reliable, dispensing with superfluous references to transmission paths or supportive *isnād* documentation. He acknowledges that such an endeavour would entail omitting a discussion of readings and their narrations, and even dispensing with a consideration of the *asbāb al-nuzūl*.²²² Despite his dutiful undertaking, the work actually comprises, alongside dicta classed as being ‘traditionally’ authentic, materials attributed to various early exegetes, including individuals whose reliability is questioned in the traditionist biographical literature. However, there is a measure of relativity about his overall approach as the traditions he includes are deemed the best ones available. This is also the case for the work of Ibn al-Mundhir (d. 319/930), whose *tafsīr* is *ḥadīth* orientated, citing traditions which are attributed to the Prophet and his Companions but also comprised in the work are recurring references to al-Kalbī, al-Suddī, and other prominent exegetes.²²³ It was Ibn Taymiyya who praised the efforts of figures such as Ibn Abī Ḥātim and indeed Abū Bakr ibn Mardawayh (d. 410/1019) for their traditionist based approach, although he was obviously aware that these and other related works had materials in them which were not all authenticated. Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 404/955), the author of *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, a supplement to the *ḥadīth* collections of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, includes an exceptionally lengthy chapter on *tafsīr* whose contents range from straightforward exegetical reports, to materials germane to ritual and law.²²⁴ Thus the ‘*ḥadīth*’ based collections were broadly devised compositions which plainly dispensed with materials such as *variae lectiones*, detailed linguistic analysis, and other rationally focused endeavours.

As has been evident from the discussions on *al-tafsīr bi’l ra’y*, there has been a tendency to locate such forms of *tafsīr* within the overarching categories of *ma’thūr* and *ra’y*: the former is said to have been informed by scholars merely adducing traditions emanating from a hierarchy of early authorities, especially materials linked with the Prophet and his Companions. While in the case of the latter, it is presumed that exegetes, many of whom belong to the first/seventh and second/eighth centuries, were exercising greater latitude and independence when interpreting Qur’ānic verses, although, as previously mentioned, the act of interpretation also entailed weighing up and expressing preferences with regards to the relevance and accuracy of exegetical dicta. However, whether such an axiomatic division of *tafsīr bi’l-ma’thūr* and *ra’y* existed is doubtful. It would appear that later scholarship was essentially speaking of a desideratum with regards to exegetical procedure and selection, although this was later referred to as *tafsīr bi’l-ma’thūr*; the nomenclature is slightly confusing as it gives the impression that these were exclusively *ḥadīth* based collections of traditionally authenticated materials with the term *tafsīr al-musnad* often being applied: a cursory glance through the corpora will show

this is not the case, although al-Nasāʾī's text certainly comes close to achieving that purpose but so many of the dicta in the text barely impinge upon issues of Qur'ānic exposition.²²⁵ Of course, a large section of Ibn Taymiyya's *Majmūʿ*, which is devoted to the exegesis of individual chapters of the Qur'ān, does embody the framework which he sets out for the pursuit of *tafsīr*. The Egyptian scholar Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī made *ḥadīth* based *tafsīr* reports the core of his work entitled *Al-Durr al-manthūr fī'l-tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr*. The work, a distinctive collection of some eleven volumes, was abridged from an earlier endeavour entitled *Turjumān al-Qur'ān*, in which he had included *tafsīr* based *ḥadīths* with their full *isnād* documentation, a fact that he states made the work less desirable for those seeking only the text of the traditions. He omitted the *isnāds* for the *al-Durr al-manthūr* commentary, retaining explicit references only to the works from which the dicta emanated.²²⁶

Towards a synthesis of the sciences of exegesis

Centuries of sustained and sophisticated scholarship in the field of Qur'ānic exegesis produced a substantial array of linguistic, theological, and legal based concepts and theories through which the text's exposition was defined. These were often discussed within individual Qur'ānic commentaries or expanded upon in separate monographs. Classical scholarship's attempts to collate and coordinate these different constructs as synoptically distilled from this earlier enterprise ultimately gave birth to the discipline of Qur'ānic hermeneutics (*'ulūm al-Qur'ān*), a field to which a steady stream of works was devoted. One such work, *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, authored by the Egyptian scholar Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī, achieves one of the most comprehensive treatments of the subject. The author defined *tafsīr* as a science through which comprehension of the revealed book of God was ascertained, adding that the clarification of the Qur'ān's meanings and the fleshing out of its legal and sapiential teachings were key objectives of the discipline; but having circumscribed the terrain of *tafsīr*, he expresses his surprise that earlier scholarship had not devoted a text specifically to the classification of the theoretical tools and concepts of exegesis in the same manner by which luminaries within the field of the *ḥadīth* sciences had followed up the collection and codification of the Prophetic traditions by developing methodological frameworks for their authentication; he comments that a similar undertaking within the field of the Qur'ān was a desideratum. The *Burhān* is structured around forty-seven key chapters, comprising materials acquisitively accumulated from centuries of sustained scholarship; in spite of that, the text was not solely concerned with outlining concepts and paradigms which defined the classical science of *tafsīr*, but it also straddled various debates which featured in its past and present discourses. Despite al-Zarkashī's modest assertion that he had simply provided preliminary summaries of the various exegetical topics and that in his estimation a lifetime

would need to be spent before one might achieve genuine mastery over just one of the many areas which his work examines, its coverage is remarkably thorough and informed and the author's input is discerning. Beginning with a summary of categories of historical circumstances surrounding the revelation of individual Qur'ānic verses and chapters, al-Zarkashī proceeded to cover themes as diverse as the mysterious letters of the Qur'ān and the theory of the text's inimitability, to the dialectal origin of the Qur'ān's vocabulary and prerequisites germane to its textual transmission.²²⁷ The sheer scope of al-Zarkashī's survey is a reflection of the breadth and depth of the scholarship which was achieved within classical exegesis and while his survey does not furnish a causal history of the discipline, it reads as an elaborate digest of recurrent debates and deliberations; the work was also an emphatic statement of intent about the enduring legacy of the discipline and its centrality to the traditions of Islamic thought.²²⁸

There did exist a number of antecedents in the form of tracts and treatises which examined hermeneutical notions and although none of these works afforded the subject the depth of coverage and detail accomplished by al-Zarkashī's text, they do intimate the historical depth of the scholarship. Thus for example, the *Kitāb fahm al-Qur'ān* of the Ṣūfī luminary al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī covers topics such as the virtues of the Qur'ān and the division of its verses into *muḥkam* and *mutashābih* categories. Also discussed at length in his work are the legal and theological implications of the theory of abrogation. Al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb (d. 406/1015) was the author of a tract entitled *Kitāb al-tanbīh 'alā faḍl 'ulūm al-Qur'ān* which detailed twenty-five categories of sequences of revelation covering individual Qur'ānic verses.²²⁹ Al-Majāshī'ī provides a detailed listing of hermeneutical categories in the introduction to his *al-Nukat fi'l-Qur'ān*, revealing the rigour which the conceptualisation of the contents of the Qur'ān was attracting.²³⁰ The text was written as a brief guide to both the interpretation of the text and its categories for his patron and is teeming with quotations emanating from leading exegetes and grammarian figures. Al-Majāshī'ī was a respected scholar with an adept command of linguistic subjects.²³¹ The anonymous *Kitāb al-mabānī*, which appears to have been written around the mid-fifth/eleventh century, does amplify the analysis of basic theoretical categories germane to exegesis.²³² It was indeed the Andalusian jurist and exegete Ibn al-'Arabī who was the author of the celebrated *Qānūn al-ta'wīl*, which, despite comprising lengthy and digressive autobiographical reminiscences, also includes sections on the mysterious letters of the Qur'ān; the use of parables; and the technical division of the verses of the Qur'ān into *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* categories. The rather discursive manner in which the exegetical themes are discussed is probably due to the fact that the work was reportedly written as a substitute for a perished treatise on the subject by the same author entitled *Anwār al-fajr*.²³³ A much more focused offering is provided by Ibn al-Jawzī in a work entitled *Funūn al-afnān fī 'uyūn 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, which

includes among its discussions the enumeration of Qur'ānic verses and a treatment of the subject of etymology.²³⁴ The Damascene scholar Abū Shāma (d. 665/1267) compiled the influential work entitled *al-Murshid al-wajīz ilā 'ulūm tata'allaq bi'l-kitāb al-'azīz*, in which particulars surrounding the textual transmission of the Qur'ān are circumscribed.²³⁵ Also of importance were the works of Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī (d. 716/1316) and al-Kāfījī (d. 879/1474): the former was the author of a treatise entitled *al-Iksīr fī 'ulūm al-tafsīr*, while the latter figure authored *al-Taysīr fī qawā'id al-tafsīr*.²³⁶ Along with the *Burhān* of al-Zarkashī, the work of the Egyptian scholar, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, serves as one of the most frequently cited popular works on classical hermeneutics. It was substantially modelled on al-Zarkashī's text, preserving an extensive conflation of quotations on classical hermeneutics. The introduction to the work is particularly useful as al-Suyūṭī enlightens his reader with a survey of texts devoted to the subject of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, notably listing their contents; in his preamble, like al-Zarkashī, he indicates his surprise that earlier scholars had not brought together scholarship covering the fundamentals of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* in the same way that *ḥadīth* scholars from the formative periods had codified the sciences of the traditions. Al-Suyūṭī mentions his authorship of a previous work he had dedicated to the subject which he listed as *al-Taḥbīr fī 'ulūm al-tafsīr*, highlighting excerpts from the introduction to a composition on Qur'ānic hermeneutics by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī (762–824/1361–1421), which took the title *Mawāqī' al-'ulūm min muwāqī' al-nujūm*.²³⁷ Needless to say, the works of both al-Zarkashī and al-Suyūṭī serve as portals to the different strands of scholarship encompassed under the umbrella of classical hermeneutics; they also give an indication of the historical background to the synthesis of ideas, offering their contributions to the discussions. Both works served as sources for later writers on hermeneutics: Ibn 'Aqīla (d. 1150/1737–8) was the author of a treatise entitled *al-Ziyāda wa'l-iḥsān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, which unquestionably betrays a heavy reliance on both al-Zarkashī and al-Suyūṭī, although, working within the paradigms of revision, augmentation, and qualification, he engagingly managed to revisit categories of classification and incorporate additional sources.²³⁸ There is a tendency to view some aspects of the scholarship which features in the much later materials as being rather derivative and unoriginal; it is important to bear in mind the objectives of such works, in terms of their providing summaries, which also consistently integrate new exegetical elements within discussions.

Debates about the sources: historical implications of the early *tafsīrs*

While the classical literature of *tafsīr* preserves a copious and diverse corpora of materials, the fact that the earliest extant archival records of the literature appear in the late second/eight century, with recensions being attributed to

earlier authorities raises a number of questions about the actual provenance of these works and even the historical reliability of their content. Thus, while traditional sources identify trajectories which predicate a convergence of early and later *tafsīr* scholarship, underlining the interplay of oral and written mechanisms for the preservation of knowledge, the extended chronological gaps which separate the appearance of earliest extant literary records from the scholarship of the periods they purport to preserve have led to much debate about whether one can accurately reconstruct or validate the traditional presentation of the history of *tafsīr*. The sparseness and fragmentary nature of archive materials, including manuscript, numismatic and archaeological evidence, are issues which are prevalent in discussions about Islamic origins. Within this broader context, traditional Muslim accounts in terms of their references to the genesis and development of *tafsīr*, and even the biographies they present of its principal cynosures, are viewed as being deliberately formulated to present an ideal portrait of the scholarship associated with *tafsīr*. However, it is important to recognise that with regards to the early literary genres of Islam, it is not the theoretical sophistication and significance of the materials found in the corpora of materials which are in dispute, but rather what remains a point of controversy is the contention that such texts were actually the works of their putative authors or that they preserved authentic dicta or materials emanating from the Prophetic and immediate post-Prophetic periods which were reliably transmitted to posterity through the traditional systems and mechanisms for the dissemination of knowledge.

Traditional frameworks which existed for the transfer of knowledge, with their emphasis on the primacy of the mentor-student relationships, which in turn were regulated by a number of established formats, meant that works ascribed to earlier scholars would often pass through sinuous processes of transmission and editorial review; and, more critically, many of the materials were given formal definition as fixed texts by later students.²³⁹ Traditionally, the increasing use of the *isnād* as an instrument of authentication, which paid due deference to the integrity and reliability of the narrators who transmitted individual reports or whole texts, permitted traditional scholarship to argue that much of the material legacy from this earlier periods had been preserved for posterity using a range of oral and written media.²⁴⁰ Decisively, the debate about authenticity and origins is not restricted to the materials of *tafsīr* but inevitably extends to all areas of literary activity connected with the genesis of Islam, including the text of the Qur'ān; the Prophetic traditions; jurisprudence; Arabic biography and history; and even theology. The question which is often posed relates to whether the ideas, topoi, and constructs which feature in the early literature reliably preserve historical records of the past, or are such materials the product of subjectively derived impressions of a bygone era, seemingly revealing more about the developed ideologies and beliefs of the historical periods in which they were composed, than those

they purport to portray.²⁴¹ Inevitably, debates about authenticity can deflect attention away from the intellectual rigour and profundity of the ideas which feature in the literature, and the ingredients of classical *tafsīr* represent a hybrid conflation of constructs and themes. Interestingly, in the debate about Islamic origins, it is the significance of the material of early *tafsīr* which provides the various discussions with valuable points of reference.²⁴²

One individual whose work was particularly influential in highlighting the issue of the reliability of the early Islamic sources is Ignaz Goldziher, particularly in the context of *ḥadīth* literature. Pursuing arguments with reference to doubts about the authenticity of the traditions, in his *Muhammedanische Studien* Goldziher advanced the argument that the *ḥadīth* do not 'serve as a document for the history of the infancy of Islam, but rather as a reflection of the tendencies which appeared in the community during the mature stages of its development.' Goldziher made the point that it was not possible to express even a tentative view as to which parts of this large corpus of extant *ḥadīth* represented the original core of authentic material, which he assumes must have existed.²⁴³ In numerous ways Goldziher laid the foundation for a much more sceptical approach to the available sources and this was a theme taken up in a number of subsequent studies; in the context of *tafsīr* literature, it was an approach which categorically dismissed the historical value of allegedly earlier texts as records of an ancient tradition of Qur'ānic interpretation; it was suggested that the materials in such works were redolent of a conspicuous attempt to create historical depth for the scholarship of *tafsīr*.²⁴⁴ In 1920 Goldziher published his work on the early and classical traditions of Qur'ānic commentary, *Die Richtungen der islamischen Koranauslegung*.²⁴⁵ The work posited that the history of exegesis had to be understood in the context of how the various religious movements associated with the early Islamic tradition attempted to interpret the Qur'ān in ways which sought to justify their own developed ideological and intellectual views. According to Goldziher, the earliest stages of exegesis were linked with the gradual attempts to achieve the textual stability of the Qur'ān, which in its early format remained voluble. Significantly, Goldziher argued that there was marked opposition to the practice of *tafsīr*, which continued into the late second/eighth century. He concluded that references in the exegetical literature to early authorities such as Ibn 'Abbās were fallacious and that very little of what is ascribed to him can safely be considered authentic due to his being regularly invoked to furnish credibility to exegetical glosses and explanations.

The concerns about authenticity raised by Goldziher with regards to Prophetic traditions were revisited by Joseph Schacht, who envisaged his work on *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* to be 'a not unworthy continuation of the studies he (Goldziher) inaugurated'.²⁴⁶ Focusing on the compilations of the Qur'ān commentators, the whole argument surrounding the paradigm of authenticity was taken to levels of increasing intricacy by

the work of John Wansbrough, a principal revisionist scholar whose theories inexorably shaped current debates on the issue of Islamic origins. It was Wansbrough's interrogation of the literature of early *tafsīr* which led him to question the relationship between the status of the Qur'ān as a fixed text (*textus receptus*) and what he perceived to be the insidious role that the literature of *tafsīr* played in the observable processes associated with canonization. Critical in his deliberations was the identification of the form, design, and context of strategies and methodologies applied within the early and medieval literature of *tafsīr*. Basing his argument on the lack of datable archival records and sources prior to the second/eighth century, Wansbrough considered it conspicuous that the profusion of questions about the meaning and form of the sacred text emerged only in the exegetical literature of the third/ninth century and not prior to that period; insofar that texts were ascribed to earlier authorities or presented as having emanated from them was of little consequence in his view for their true provenance could not be substantiated. He argued that an examination of the available literature showed that 'both the document of revelation and the corpus of pre-Islamic poetry were being there assembled, juxtaposed, and studied for the first time.'²⁴⁷ Moreover, Wansbrough reasoned that in its earliest format *tafsīr* was pursued within a narrative framework which he termed haggadic, stressing that the 'chronological sequence of literature on the Qur'ān did not presuppose a standard or *ne varietur textus receptus* as early as the middle of the first/seventh century' and on that basis the 'Uthmānic codex must be seen as a post third/ninth century occurrence composed from a conflation of Prophetic *logia*.'²⁴⁸

In the context of the *tafsīrs* of Muqātil and al-Kalbī, it was conspicuous to him that they comprised intrusive elements and stylistic fluctuations which impinged upon their overall textual integrity and reliability as evidence of *tafsīr* in the periods they were alleged to have been composed.²⁴⁹ A summary glimpse of some of the *isnāds* of the dicta which feature throughout these works along with discussions within the *tafsīrs* betrays numerous anachronisms in the form of glosses which originated from later individuals, although technically speaking the procedures which governed the transmission of texts would have allowed such additions to be critically distinguished.²⁵⁰ Still, in view of that, Wansbrough concluded that 'haggadic' works such as the *tafsīr* works of both Muqātil and Kalbī 'are not earlier than the date proposed to mark the beginnings of Arabic literature, namely, 200/815.'²⁵¹ He estimated that the appeal to *loci probantes* in the form of poetry as a tool for elucidating the Qur'ānic expression, which was conspicuously endorsed by dicta attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, did not occur before the third/ninth century; indeed his view was that the normative discipline of *tafsīr* did not emerge before the third/ninth century. And that the use of profane language as an interpretive tool surfaced with regularity in exegetical texts which were masoretic in design, such as al-Farrā's *Ma'ānī*.²⁵² Wansbrough defined masoretic *tafsīr*

as encapsulating forms of exegetical scholarship which focused on the textual specifics of the transmission of the Qur'ān and its linguistic justification with reference to variant readings of scripture, grammatical analysis, and lexical explanation, which, according to Wansbrough's typology, developed belatedly. Wansbrough concluded that the Qur'ān must have emerged as a fixed text much later than the periods specified in the traditional sources, although this was just one of many interrelated and broader suppositions which issued from his work.²⁵³ His views regarding the emergence of the beginnings of Arabic literature in the early third/ninth century together with the issues they raise with regards to the authenticity of materials prior to this historical juncture continue to be debated. Wansbrough's broader thesis was that the Qur'ān had its origins in an Iraqi milieu and that in light of his reading of the literary function of the earliest literature, the traditionally promoted Hījāzī framework of the Qur'ān was contrived.²⁵⁴ He maintained that 'seventh century Hījāz owes its historiographical existence almost entirely to the creative endeavour of Muslim and Oriental scholarship.'²⁵⁵ Also relevant to the whole issue of authenticity was the question of whether traditional methods for the transmission of later literary texts inspired confidence or were they too vulnerable to the processes of manipulation.²⁵⁶

The recent work of François Déroche on the *Le Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, which consists of fragments from a Qur'ānic manuscript discovered in the 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ mosque in Fustat, Egypt together with the manuscript finds at Ṣan'ā', necessitates a fundamental rethink with regards to Wansbrough's conclusion à propos the historical confines for the emergence of the Qur'ān as a fixed text.²⁵⁷ Déroche suggests that the manuscript could be a copy of an older codex, proposing the third quarter of the 1st/7th century as the date of its origin. But he does question whether the traditional accounts of the genesis of the 'Uthmānic codex can be reconciled with the 'technical possibilities of the Arabic script towards the middle of the 1st/7th century' and that the caliph's role in establishing a vulgate may have been less ambitious than traditionally implied.²⁵⁸ Déroche explains that also debatable is the relationship between oral and written transmission in these early periods and that the role of orality in the context of a recited text remains unresolved.²⁵⁹ Déroche does speculate that the Parisino-petropolitanus would have been subjected to emendation and corrections over a long time span and that this would have led to the eventual elimination of discrepancies. Yet he concludes that the efforts of the scholars of second/eighth century, mostly the readers and grammarians who feature so prominently in the literature of *tafsīr*, were to play a critical role in establishing the fields of learning associated with the Qur'ān's transmission; he also adds that it was the Qur'ānic codex of the first/seventh century which provided the reference point for their endeavour.²⁶⁰ The oral pre-history of the Qur'ān is a theme salient in the work of Angelika Neuwirth, who argues that the 'heterogeneous ensemble' which came to represent the canonical Qur'ānic text must have been established

before the period of the great conquests.²⁶¹ She makes the case that the canonical text was formed from a nucleus of preceding materials which were oral in terms of their organic countenance and liturgical with regards to their primary function: her contention is that the processes of canonization had meant that ‘neatly structured chapters’ were juxtaposed with materials whose structure was much more loose.²⁶² Her conception of the genre of the *Sūra*, as introduced by the Prophet, visualises its becoming ‘blurred in the consciousness of the later community.’ Although identifying an Arabian context to these materials and supplying an earlier date for the emergence of a redacted text, the denouement of Neuwirth’s synthesis is that the literature of *tafsīr* in both its early and classical expression belongs to a discourse which is historically detached from the text it seeks to elucidate.

A theoretical attempt to bridge the conceived historical gap between the extant literary texts and their presumed antecedents is provided in the work of Gregor Schoeler. In his influential *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums* Fuat Sezgin had argued that written materials had always been in existence within the Islamic tradition and that it was possible to reconstruct originals which served as the sources of later extant works. With regards to Sezgin, Rippin made the point that ‘he wants to prove the existence of these early written documents in order to establish claims for the validity of *ḥadīth* transmission and the *isnād* mechanism’, but that ‘his listing of *tafsīr* works reveals, however, a flimsy basis for his position: author’s names proliferate, for example, because a listing in Ibn al-Nadīm’s *Fihrist* has proven sufficient to justify an entry even though there is no actual evidence of the text’s existence.’²⁶³ A similar position to Sezgin’s one was advocated by Nabia Abbott, who posited that written antecedents had been in circulation in these earlier periods; she contended that they were ostensibly utilised in the later literature.²⁶⁴ Schoeler sought to develop a different explanation, referring to the fact that a number of studies had identified discrepancies in Sezgin’s central thesis about the existence of original texts and had demonstrated that works such as the *tafsīr* attributed to the exegete Mujāhid were never fixed texts but simply subsequent arrangements or citations which had surfaced in later works, referring specifically to there being ‘a high degree of discrepancy between those different versions.’²⁶⁵ Schoeler believed that Sezgin’s position had been influenced by his desire to illustrate the authenticity of the texts and the materials they comprised, and his thesis about the mechanisms which governed the transmission of knowledge within the Islamic tradition was an attempt to find a compromise solution which would reconcile ‘diametrically opposed points of view.’ Inspired by the work of Aloys Sprenger, he proposed that a distinction should be drawn ‘between notes intended as aides-mémoire or lecture notes, and published books’, arguing that the notion of fixed books, with the exception of the Qur’ān, did not exist until the late second/eighth century. In his view Sībawayhi’s *Kitāb* was the first fixed book

of its kind in the Islamic tradition; he argued that the conventional frameworks and methods for the dissemination of knowledge relied upon a complementary fusing of oral and written media which was presented through the system of lectures and conventional teaching practices with mentors delivering their lectures to auditing students. This meant that mentors were able to revise and even amend their notes, which when individually preserved for fixed formats over later periods, led to the emergence of variants.²⁶⁶ Indeed, Schoeler did suggest that scholars ‘even as late as the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries, often did not give their work a definite, fixed shape.’²⁶⁷ The critical distinction provided by the Greek terms *hypomnēma* (pl. *hypomnēmata*) and *syngamma* (pl. *syngammata*) is introduced by Schoeler to illustrate the process of transmission and its manifestation within Islamic contexts and indeed it is used to highlight perceived conceptual shortcomings inherent in Sezgin’s *Geschichte*: Schoeler argues that despite the achievement of Sezgin’s work, it failed to distinguish between the notion of *syngamma* and *hypomnēma*; nor did it entertain the existence of such a distinction.²⁶⁸

In the context of the early work on *tafsīr* attributed to Mujāhid, which was formally circulated under the title *Tafsīr Warqā’ ‘an Ibn Abī Najīh*, Schoeler estimated that it fell into the category of works which most likely constituted original lecture notes preserved, transmitted, and even revised by a succession of students, although hypothetically, rules existed to enable additions to be distinguished.²⁶⁹ It would be argued that by the application of Schoeler’s theory to a text such as Muqātil’s *tafsīr*, one would be able to explain the existence of anachronistic glosses in the text and its *isnāds*; however, in contrast, Wansbrough’s theory is informed by the parameters of style and literary form, which are not addressed in Schoeler’s work, for in the former’s judgement, it is the literary countenance of given texts which can help resolve the issue of historical provenance. Schoeler’s work attempts to offer a workable solution to the thorny question of authenticity, offering an explanation for the redaction of early texts, although whether the theory is reductive in terms of its reliance upon works whose historical constitution is the subject of speculation is a moot point. It was Fred Leemhuis who postulated the existence of a common living tradition of knowledge from which later scholars extracted and to which they gave form in the guise of fixed literary works; this explanation was used to account for the constitution of Mujāhid’s *tafsīr*.

In his quest to uncover the origin of the Arabic grammatical terminology that features in the *Kitāb* of Sibawayhi, the first comprehensive analysis of the language which furnished the theoretical basis for centuries of Arabic linguistic thought, Kees Versteegh, turned his attention to the exegetical treatises ascribed to Muqātil, Muḥammad al-Kalbī, Sufyān al-Thawrī, Mujāhid, and Ma‘mar ibn Rāshid, whose dicta were transmitted by the Yemeni traditionist ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī. Versteegh had previously

been an advocate of the thesis that Arabic grammar was modelled on Greek linguistic concepts which had filtered through via translations from Syriac.²⁷⁰ Having isolated a list of basic grammatical terms in Muqātil's *tafsīr*, which suggested that primitive grammatical ideas were already in circulation prior to Sībawayhi, Versteegh concluded that 'the earlier hypothesis of a Greek origin for certain terms was rendered inoperative on the basis of the data in the early commentaries.'²⁷¹ Examining further traces of grammatical terminology in the first extant exegetical treatises, Versteegh inferred that the indigenous school of language, later associated with the Kufans' tradition and figures such as al-Farrā' and al-Kisā'ī, formed part of an earlier heritage of learning which developed independently and was closely aligned with the study of the Qur'ān and its readings; according to Versteegh, Sībawayhi's achievement in the field of language was his introduction of a wholly innovative approach and framework which revolutionised the study of language, placing it firmly on an evidently more systematic setting.

In the context of the extant exegetical texts, Versteegh reasoned that notwithstanding the distinctions proffered by Schoeler with regards to the conventions adhered to in the transmission of knowledge, the texts of exegetes such as Muqātil and Kalbī, far from being haggadic products of the post second/eighth century, had their origins in the earlier tradition; the implication is that the historical trajectories taken by developments in terminology and concepts predicate a greater depth to the literature than hitherto recognized by Wansbrough. Versteegh did postulate that the forms of scholarship associated with the Kufans' grammatical tradition tended to focus on the treatment of *ma'ānī* type works which were configured around the selective grammatical treatment of the Qur'ānic text; whereas their Basran peers incorporated aspects of Qur'ānic analysis into a much more general theory of language.²⁷² Nevertheless, despite this assertion it is unquestionable that the Kufans were just as interested in more general treatments of philological and syntactical thought in addition to writing within the *ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* and the *gharīb al-Qur'ān* genres. The works of al-Akhfash and al-Zajjāj intimate that authorship in the field of *ma'ānī* was common to the emerging linguistic schools of Kufa and Basra. Versteegh did speak of his being mystified by the absence of any historical connection between Muqātil and the various Kufan grammarians and concluded that there must have been a common source upon which both groups were dependent and ultimately based their analyses, surmising that a proto-Ibn 'Abbās commentary, as it was transmitted by Muqātil, would have 'served as the basis for grammatical teaching in the Kufan tradition.'²⁷³

The literature of early *tafsīr* continues to play a pivotal role in the discussions germane to authenticity and origins. The historical disjunction between the appearance of the earliest extant *tafsīr* texts and the traditional dates for the imposition of the 'Uthmānic codex has led to speculation about the genuine authority of the Qur'ānic explanations proffered by early exegetes,

especially given that frequent differences existed among commentators on questions relating to Qur'ānic vocabulary, along with explanations of the legal and theological import of certain verses.²⁷⁴ The suggestion is that there exists an incontrovertible distinction between the meaning of the Qur'ān in a seemingly original context and its interpretation in the later literature, in which it is assumed that a subjective range of doctrinal, social, and ideological expediencies was subconsciously driving exegetical discourses.²⁷⁵ A Wansbroughian explanation would seek an answer in the late development of the Qur'ān and its gradual separation from Prophetic logia to the extent that the delayed emergence of fixed canon resulted in a less than focused understanding of the original elements of the text. Such an explanation would supposedly account for why exegetes of the second/third centuries were often viewed to be venturing guesses as to the meaning of certain verses.²⁷⁶ Somewhat connected to this issue is the exegetical role that the biographical accounts of the life of the Prophet appear to play in furnishing the text of the Qur'ān with an historical background and context which subsequently becomes the template for the pursuit of *tafsīr*.²⁷⁷ Again, the contention is that the biographical literature, whose late provenance is emphasized, represents a subjective attempt to make sense of an allusive Qur'ānic narrative and is therefore exegetical in terms of its overall countenance and design.²⁷⁸ Others have questioned whether one can explain the genesis of the biographical literature purely in terms of its being created to provide the Qur'ān with a narrative.

Another important point raised with regards to the debate about the historical value of *tafsīr*, stems from the assertion that the Qur'ān needs to be understood through reference to its relationship with the corpora of Christian and Jewish materials, on the basis that Qur'ānic exempla were ultimately engaging with a substrate of late antique religious narratives. *Ex hypothesi*, there exists a disjunction between the Qur'ān and its commentaries on the basis that '*tafsīr* is the product of a society removed from the period of Islamic origins' and that even the earliest exegetes 'were unable to understand basic elements of the Qur'ān'; within the framework of such views, it would be considered imperative to broach the Qur'ān in conjunction with the materials which preceded it and not with the *tafsīr* materials which are supposedly posterior to the text they seek to elucidate.²⁷⁹ The creation of a distinctiveness which provided the nascent faith with broader lines of definition is also seen as having an impact on the characterisation of emerging doctrinal discourses. And it would be argued that the explication of the Qur'ān which features in traditionally produced commentaries was a reflection of such processes.²⁸⁰ Ultimately, whether such views fully appreciate the theoretical thrust and context of the discourses of early *tafsīr* remains debatable. Still, it is the technical tools and methodologies applied in Qur'ānic exegesis and the history of their development which make the discipline so unique in its original context, notwithstanding the achievements of the great literary works of the commentators.

Introducing the Collection

The principal aim of this Collection is to provide a representative selection of the modern academic scholarship devoted to the study of *tafsīr* in its early and medieval setting, focusing on key aspects of historical genesis; classical discourses; and literary achievements, although materials devoted to contemporary issues do feature in the Collection.²⁸¹ The Collection is arranged around four broad headings, which are further divided into six thematic parts. Volume I of the Collection focuses on the themes of ‘Gestation and Synthesis’ and features materials which cover the history and development of *tafsīr*, including the emergence of the earliest literary texts. Volume II takes as its focal point materials which explore the ‘Theory and Constructs’ of classical *tafsīr* scholarship with a specific interest in the procedural and conceptual exegetical devices which became essential elements of hermeneutic discourses. Volume III is devoted to the ‘Scholarship of *Tafsīr*’ and reviews the legacy of the great commentators along with the various genres and features of commentaries which the tradition produced. Volume IV is devoted to a broader range of areas under the heading ‘Topics, Themes, and Approaches’ within classical and modern exegesis. Although taken separately, Volumes III and IV are not thematically exclusive as they cover interrelated topics and subjects common to both volumes. The quality and quantity of the articles and research materials devoted to the academic exploration of *tafsīr* have made the process of selecting articles an unenviable one; ultimately, priority was given to materials which fitted in with the overall thematic arrangement of the Collection and are available in the English language. A representative bibliography of works connected or relative to the scholarship of *tafsīr*, including many of the primary reference sources of the discipline, has been provided in the section on notes.

An extensive summary of the literature of classical and medieval exegesis is mapped out in Claude Gilliot’s survey with which the collection opens.²⁸² Gilliot examines the historical genesis of the various genres within *tafsīr*, covering narrative, traditional, legal, theological, and mystical based treatments of the Qur’ān. This includes the conceptual relevance of various epistemic themes frequently discussed in classical commentaries, including technical nuances between *tafsīr* and *ta’wīl*; the notion of opposition to *tafsīr*; and the traditional division of Qur’ānic verses into ambiguous *contra* unambiguous categories. Prominent in his digest of classical scholarship is the contribution made by grammarians to *tafsīr*, which Gilliot considers to be seminal as far as early developments within the genre are concerned. Abū ‘Ubayda’s *Majāz al-Qur’ān* and al-Farrā’s *Ma’ānī* are considered by Gilliot to augur the introduction of the grammatical sciences into exegetical works and that written works emerged ‘at least by the early second/eighth century.’ And he argues that the exegesis of the text was not the preserve of the commentators but rather it surfaced in all sorts of literary formats. It is the history and

development of *tafsīr* and the emergence of its earliest literary texts which are examined in Fred Leemhuis's survey of the 'Origins and Early Development of the *tafsīr* Tradition.' In this piece the pivotal issue of the authenticity of the earliest exegetical materials is assessed with reference to the *tafsīr* attributed to Mujāhid, which was transmitted as *Kitāb al-tafsīr 'an Warqā' ibn 'Umar* (d. 160/776) '*an Ibn Abī Najīh* (d. 131/749 or 132/750) '*an Mujāhid*. The question raised by the chapter is: 'are the claims of the authors of the late second and third Islamic century, that they pass on the materials of older authorities, historically correct?' Mujāhid is of course a notable early exegete whose contributions to interpretation feature across the gamut of Qur'ān commentaries; yet in Leemhuis's effort an attempt is made to determine the historical origin of the actual text on *tafsīr* with which he was linked. Sezgin had deduced from the existence of the *tafsīr* that scholars such al-Ṭabarī had access to original literary sources and that they could be reconstructed from the later sources. Separately, Leemhuis and Georg Stauth had both produced detailed studies of the text and concluded that the written fixation of the works that transmit Mujāhid's *tafsīr* took place 'around the middle of the second century.'²⁸³ And on that basis he argues that before that time the conception of 'definitive and complete literary works' did not exist. However, Leemhuis was not suggesting that the material was the blatant product of deliberate forgery, but rather in the case of the *tafsīr* of Mujāhid, it was ultimately the remnant or deposit of a 'living tradition' which was fixed subsequently. The contention that earlier works could be reconstructed was, on the basis of his findings, historically unsustainable; they simply did not exist originally in a fixed format. According to Leemhuis, the materials which contributed to the contents of classical *tafsīr* would have originally been part of the 'living tradition.'

In the *Fihrist* Ibn al-Nadīm devotes the third section of his opening chapter to scholarship on the Qur'ān, enumerating the vast range of works which were connected either with the textual transmission of the text or its exegesis.²⁸⁴ Following a discussion of the individuals and works associated with the transmission of the Qur'ān and its codification, Ibn al-Nadīm introduces the various disciplines and sub-genres of Qur'ānic exegesis, listing the extant and putative texts composed in the various fields. His inventory encompassed general commentaries on the Qur'ān and grammatical works which featured under the rubric *ma'ānī*, *mushkil*, and *majāz al-Qur'ān*, to texts written on the grammatical and philological treatments of the Qur'ān. In his article Dimitry Frolow posits the view that far from being a random listing of works and their authors, which has a wider signification, the *Fihrist* offers one of the 'earliest Muslim conceptions of the history of *tafsīr*' and one which, in Frolow's understanding, is 'definitely Shī'ite in outlook' and that this characteristic sets it apart from al-Suyūṭī's *Itqān*, whose conception of the history of the Qur'ānic sciences pursues a dissimilar trajectory. Staying with the history of *tafsīr*, in a contribution which offers critical

observations about the historical status of the discipline of *tafsīr* and its treatment in both classical Islamic and Western academic scholarship, Bruce Fudge provides an explanation as to why the field of *tafsīr* has received less academic attention than the study of the Qur'ān and that as a discipline it is 'seldom treated on its own terms.'²⁸⁵ Fudge takes the view that the 'genre occupies a somewhat marginal or at least subordinate place' within the larger scheme of the Islamic sciences', contending that most of the authors of the seminar texts of *tafsīr* were principally renowned for their expertise in other religious disciplines; and that it was the presuppositions and premises of such disciplines and outlooks which ultimately impinged upon the countenance of their contributions to *tafsīr*. Within the context of this view, *tafsīr* is not considered to be 'a priority' as a discipline but simply a format within which to promulgate ideas cultivated in more prominent areas of learning; Fudge even contends that the existence of exegetes as an independent class of scholars remains historically vague, although examples where the influence of *tafsīr* has been critical are acknowledged. It is of course fascinating to observe that the ubiquitous refrain found in the introductions to the classical commentaries was the declaration that *tafsīr* was the most esteemed of all the religious sciences; Fudge would consider such claims to be vaporous even arguing that the Orientalist assumption that there existed an exalted status for the discipline is ill-informed.

Efim Rezvan's survey of the genre of *tafsīr* switches attention to the historical confines of its scholarship and the concepts and ideas which prefigured approaches to interpretation. In his overview wider socio-political, theological, and cultural contexts are delicately highlighted.²⁸⁶ Variances with regards to the content and focus of individual *tafsīr* works are discussed along with their underlying aims. The literature of the modern era is assessed both in terms of the continuum which defines the generic boundaries of pre-modern and modern works and the overriding ideological strictures which defined their content; and the adaptability of the discipline is assessed in light of the modern attempts to attempt to reconcile scientific material within traditional *tafsīr* discourses. Rezvan makes the interesting observation that expressions of contemporary exegesis show that the 'boundaries between "progressive" and "conservative" between "topical" and "archaic" are constantly shifting.' Charting the historiography of *tafsīr* through reference to the histories of *tafsīr* published in Arabic forms the focus of the final chapter in this part by Walid Saleh. He develops the view that the identification of the modern ideological camps which have played pivotal roles in the publication of major *tafsīr* works is key to comprehending the technical importance attached to the categorisation of the genres of *tafsīr*. Saleh also uses his survey to deconstruct the misleading use of the term '*al-tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr*' in the sense that it should not be understood as exclusively embodying traditionally transmitted exegesis, which was traced to the earliest authorities. In his work Saleh has consistently argued that the discipline of *tafsīr* was uniquely placed

at the summit of the Islamic sciences in the sense that it offered an unrivalled format through which ideas and thoughts could be nurtured and fleshed out. On a more general point Saleh does take the view that the scholarship of classical Qur'ānic interpretation has failed to attract the interest it warrants when compared with the other Islamic sciences as the genre is mistakenly viewed as being mired in stagnation and repetitive.

The early literature which defined the crystallization of the genre of *tafsīr* provides the background for Part 2 of the Collection in which the issues of dating and authenticity are examined.²⁸⁷ It opens with Claude Gilliot's examination of the beginnings of Qur'ānic exegesis in which he cogitates the wider implications of the impact of the 'irruption of grammar into exegesis' and the effect it had upon the processes of formalizing the discipline of *tafsīr*. Gilliot argues that 'the discipline is marked by hagiography and bears all the marks of salvation history.' Moreover, in his survey of the types of exegetical literature and their procedural features, Gilliot emphasises issues such as ascription, anachronism, retrojection, and religious opposition to illustrate the 'deceptively artificial' nature of this discipline and its actual purpose and design: namely, the quest for historical and religious legitimacy. Interestingly, in a later piece of work by Gilliot (Chapter 1 in the Collection), he did accept that the existence of *tafsīr* materials had an earlier provenance than he hitherto countenanced. While Gilliot sets out to locate the dynamic which foreshadows the Muslim tradition's presentation of its history of *tafsīr*, fundamentally calling into question the historicity of the scholarship it professes to embody, Kees Versteegh refers to this scholarship in order to uncover the origins of the grammatical terminology which featured in the earliest grammatical treatises.²⁸⁸ It is Muqātil ibn Sulaymān's *Tafsīr* which is examined in this investigation and in it Versteegh concludes that the primitive existence of terminologies in the *tafsīr* hinted that there was an internal dimension to their development which, through later stages of progression, were refined by both Kufan and Basran grammarians and used in their earliest treatises. As mentioned previously, Versteegh had considered the idea that Greek linguistic models were relied upon by Arabic grammarians for developing terminologies and it was his study of Muqātil's *tafsīr* which led to his revision of this view.²⁸⁹ Among the conclusions drawn by Versteegh were that Kufan scholars were affiliated to an ancient tradition of language study; the Basrans, inspired by Sībawayhi, revolutionised the study of language, promoting new ideals and terminologies. Versteegh adopted a similar approach in his examination of the work on the subject of *Gharīb al-Qur'ān*, attributed to Zayd ibn 'Alī (d. 124/741). Of course, the importance of such findings are premised by the general attitude one adopts towards the authenticity of the sources, and indeed this is a point which Versteegh concedes. It was the pitfalls of using texts whose provenance was the subject of dispute which were discussed by Andrew Rippin in a review article devoted principally to Versteegh's monograph entitled *Arabic Grammar and Qur'ānic Exegesis*

in *Early Islam*, although Miklos Muranyi's publication of 'Abd Allāh ibn Wahb's *al-Jāmi'*: *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* is also briefly considered.²⁹⁰ Rippin had made the point that the paucity of the sources together with concerns about their authenticity renders establishing the history of their intellectual development a burdensome task. In his view such a state of affairs accentuates the importance of John Wansbrough's work and his arguments about the early literary sources. As Rippin explains he was the first individual to analyse the content of early *tafsīr* texts and their relationship with the rise of the canonical status of the Qur'ān. Taking up the arguments about stylistic and functional variations in literary texts as advocated by Wansbrough, Rippin drew attention to the fact that the forms of exegetical analysis with which the texts studied by Versteegh are concerned do betray characteristics of analysis which were decidedly posterior to the periods from which they were alleged to have emanated. Versteegh had used the texts of Mujāhid, Sufyān al-Thawrī, al-Kalbī, Muqātil, and 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī as sources for his study of Qur'ānic exegesis, endeavouring to trace the embryonic synthesis of grammatical concepts through references to these *tafsīr* texts. Versteegh had taken the view that exegesis had arisen out of the need to 'investigate' religious and social practices. While accepting that Versteegh's analysis of the 'material at hand is illuminating and thorough', Rippin's reservation is that the value of such sources for the purposes of 'history' is problematic. His line of argument is that these texts might contain an 'historical kernel of truth' but one is unable to determine where that actually exists within a given text. Rippin also takes the opportunity to discuss the existing scholarly consensus on the texts used by Versteegh, including a number of texts not included in the survey; they include Abū 'Ubayd's *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān* and 'Abd Allāh ibn Wahb's *al-Jāmi'*, which was produced in a polished critical edition by Muranyi. The text is an example of the 'early periphrastic type of exegesis', although the work, along with Ibn Wahb's companion text on the sciences of the Qur'ān, was not available for Versteegh's survey. Muranyi takes the view that the *tafsīr* yields insights into the state of Islam in the early second/eighth century, although Rippin points out that this is based on traditional *isnād* dating criteria; however, he happily accepts 'there can be little doubt about the third century date of the manuscript' and the 'comparatively early nature of the material.'

The debate about authenticity is explored in two further studies by Rippin included in Part II of the first volume: the first of which considers some of the problems resulting from the attempt to resolve the history of the emergence of early *tafsīr* texts and is based on a study of the text on abrogation attributed to Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī.²⁹¹ Despite being published in 1984, the broad issues it raises about dating, authenticity, particularly with regards to whether materials derived from later compilations but ascribed to an earlier author are the products of bona fide transmission, and the literary format of early works, remain just as relevant today. Through a forensic analysis

of both its textual transmission and content, Rippin proceeds to the view that even though one might find among such compilations specific elements which betray an early provenance, as is the case for this text, also embedded within its narrative are materials whose countenance are redolent of a developed stage in legal discussions, although the broader point alluded to by Rippin is the question of whether texts such as this one should be 'relied upon to provide a source of early material.' In a second article by Rippin the issue of the accuracy of the ascription of texts is revisited in an attempt to deal with the problem of the proliferation of ascription which surrounds the text known as *Tanwīr al-miqbās min tafsīr Ibn 'Abbās*. The contention that the text should be treated as the *Kitāb al-wāḍiḥ fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, a work by 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Dīnawarī (d. 308/920), had been first mooted in Rippin's article on al-Zuhri's *Kitāb al-naskh*, in which he mentioned that Wansbrough had simply noted that al-Dīnawarī's work was a verbatim reproduction of al-Kalbī's text. But in this article Rippin seeks to justify the relationship between the ascribed versions of this text, which are essentially identical, yet linked with four different authors: Ibn 'Abbās, al-Kalbī, al-Dīnawarī, and al-Fīrūzābādī, the author of the lexicon *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīt*, with the aim of pondering the wider implications of the accuracy of ascription.²⁹² Rippin believes that the insidious use of an *isnād* which presupposes the text's connection with Ibn 'Abbās is a remnant of the *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* and *tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr* debates in which attempts were made to restrain the resort to opinion in *tafsīr* and accentuate 'the most honourable material that may be found in the tradition' and that this dovetails with struggles for religious authority; furthermore, it is posited that a more profound significance to the invoking of Ibn 'Abbās rests with his becoming 'a mythic exemplum for the Muslim community.'²⁹³

More recently, while accepting the conclusions reached by Rippin regarding the dating of the *Tanwīr al-miqbās* and the fact that it is neither the work of al-Kalbī nor al-Fīrūzābādī, but actually al-Dīnawarī's *Kitāb al-wāḍiḥ fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, in his contribution to the discussions Harald Motzki has suggested that questions do linger about the text: namely, the precise identity of the author of the text; the relationship between al-Kalbī's text and the *Kitāb al-wāḍiḥ*; and the issue of the reliability of Rippin's method of dating the text.²⁹⁴ On the first point Motzki concludes that the actual author of the text is Abū Muḥammad ibn al-Mubārak al-Dīnawarī, who was theologically linked with the Karrāmites; on the second point, Motzki argues that there is evidence to suggest that al-Dīnawarī (al-Mubārak) was also the transmitter of Ibn al-Kalbī's text, which he frequently used and often adapted. But Motzki also made the case that it is possible to identify original fragments of al-Kalbī's *tafsīr* which were used by later exegetes and which differed from the materials transmitted by al-Dīnawarī, indicating the possibility that the materials have their provenance in al-Kalbī's era. Finally, on the point of the methods used for dating, Motzki believes that a critical study of *isnāds*

and indeed biographies is crucial to resolving issues of the historical chronology of texts and while dating on the basis of literary and stylistic conventions is entirely valid, its combination with the former process is much more productive. While not disputing the dating of the *Kitāb al-wāḍiḥ* by Rippin, Motzki posits the existence of an early source in the form of al-Kalbī's *tafsīr*. But the thrust of Rippin's argument relates to the broader issue of whether one can rely upon such literary materials as sources for the earlier periods due to the complexities of their composite constitution.

The traditionally prolific role accorded to Ibn 'Abbās as the progenitor and author of a large portion of corpus of *tafsīr* dicta forms the subject of Herbert Berg's study of how his prominence in Qur'ānic exegesis is linked with the political and religious power of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate.²⁹⁵ With regards to the historical Ibn 'Abbās, Berg makes the point that even a tentative reconstruction of this figure's life is fraught with difficulties due to the unreliable and tendentious nature of biographical sources on him, noting that even early sources such as Ibn Sa'd's *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* comprised significant amounts of legendary material about his personage. Interestingly, the reference to the Prophet's supplicating that Ibn 'Abbās be granted wisdom and the ability to interpret the Qur'ān does feature in Muqātil's *tafsīr*. Berg points out that scholars such as Sprenger, Nöldeke, and Schwally had already raised doubts about the authenticity of the materials attributed to him, although it was Harris Birkeland who suggested that his opinions were a sociological fact in terms of their representing 'the consensus of the Muslim community at the end of the second/eighth century.' Following a quantitative survey of sample references to Ibn 'Abbās in the *Tafsīr al-Jāmi'* of 'Abd Allāh ibn Wahb; the section on *tafsīr* in al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*; and al-Ṭabarī's *Tafsīr*, Berg set out to determine whether the status of Ibn 'Abbās developed prior to the political aspirations of Ibn 'Abbās' grandson Muḥammad ibn 'Alī (d. 125/743) and the importance of his reputation in subsequent periods. The survey does evaluate the type of reports in which he is adduced and the centrality of his personage within these materials. The conclusion reached is that his status is by no means static and that some aspects of his reputation was achieved before the 'Abbāsīds became 'players in Islamic politics', but that it was enhanced further at the heart of 'Abbāsīd power, although Berg also detects a decline in his status much later.

The final article in this section by Harald Motzki offers a comprehensive study of the general state of play with regards to the academic debate about the origins of Muslim exegesis.²⁹⁶ Pointing out that since the beginning of the twentieth century Western academic scholarship has taken a generally negative view of the reliability of the traditional accounts of the genesis and development of the discipline of exegesis, particularly the role envisaged of Ibn 'Abbās in its history, Motzki pores over the key perspectives which scholars have advocated. Among which is the position of individuals such as Fuat Sezgin, Nabia Abbott, Isaiah Goldfeld, who were all sympathetic

to the traditional view and even accepted the existence of early written sources, and Kees Versteegh, who argued that the extant literature provides 'a clear picture' of Ibn 'Abbās' teachings. And the perspectives of those scholars such as Wansbrough, Rippin, Gilliot, and indeed Berg, who held strong reservations about Ibn 'Abbās' historical status as the founder of exegesis. Leemhuis' theory, discussed above, is seen by Motzki as offering an intermediate solution with regards to his postulating the existence of a 'living tradition' which yielded the sources for the classical tradition's construction of *tafsīr*. Although having previously questioned the accuracy of Berg's classification of academic scholarship into sanguine and sceptical camps vis-à-vis the reliability of the sources, particularly in terms of his critique of Berg's rejection of the utility of *isnāds*, Motzki focused on a study by Berg in which the latter drew parallels between the underlying assumptions adopted by 'sceptical' and 'sanguine' scholars and the conclusions they often reached; Berg had used forms of analysis synonymous with both camps to illustrate his assertion.²⁹⁷ Motzki takes the position that Berg's application of the *isnād-cum-matn* approach lacks accuracy and sophistication, maintaining that he also fundamentally misconstrues Motzki's own standpoint regarding the authenticity of the *hadīths*. Motzki then explains that he does not believe that traditions are largely authentic but rather that the traditions found in extant compilations were not the invention of the authors of these works but rather they have a history which extends backwards. Furthermore, he also questions Berg's submission that the 'common link should be viewed as a common source for, not the originator of, the *matn*.' The common link here is defined as 'the key transmitter whom many or most transmitter lines of a tradition have in common.' But Motzki counters that he does entertain the idea that the common link can be the originator of a tradition or a collecting transmitter, and in instances even a fiction. In many senses the distinctions highlighted by Motzki reflect his position that sweeping generalizations about the origin of the sources need to be avoided.

Much of the chapter discusses points raised in Berg's article, allowing Motzki to set out his thesis of how it is possible to differentiate between exegetical materials that might be deemed reliable from those which are evidently not. Part of the chapter is devoted to exploring the exegesis found in a number of the earlier commentaries, including the works of Muqātil, Abū 'Ubayda, al-Farrā', al-Akhfash, al-Kalbī, and Zayd ibn 'Alī, all of whom, he concludes, combine elements of early exegesis without disclosing their sources. Suppositions to which Berg subscribes provide the backdrop for many of the discussions and also included is an extended treatment of the general tenor of Wansbrough's arguments and views with regards to the development of early exegesis in which Motzki defends the efficacy of historical source analysis and the *isnād-cum-matn* method. He argues that such methods can be used constructively to determine whether sources derive from the persons to whom they are ascribed and whether they can be faithfully reconstructed.

Under the heading theories and constructs of *tafsīr*, Volume II of the Collection includes studies which focus upon ‘Procedural and Conceptual Exegetical Devices’ utilised within classical exegesis. It begins with John Wansbrough’s study investigating the technical significance of the term *majāz*, which serves as an explanatory tool in Abū ‘Ubayda’s commentary, *Majāz al-Qur’ān*.²⁹⁸ Wansbrough did conclude that the study of variant readings of scripture, grammatical analysis, and lexical paraphrase were all elements of masoretic exegesis. He estimated that the term *majāz* as used by Abū ‘Ubayda’s simply connoted periphrastic exegesis, epitomising the ‘insertion of explanatory elements into elliptic phraseology.’ Wansbrough linked *majāz* to the processes of textual restoration (*taqdīr*), which aimed to ‘alleviate the strictures imposed upon the language by Qur’ānic diction’, thereby providing textual clarity as opposed to literary embellishment. It was much later that *majāz* was used technically to exemplify metaphorical expressions and the figurative usage of language. In Wansbrough’s thesis there existed both grammatical as well as doctrinal reasons behind the use of the *majāz* mechanism. Similar exegetical techniques, which are employed in Saadya Gaon’s treatment of Targum and Masorah, are referred to for the parallels they offer. Wansbrough does remark that it is a short step from exegetical to rhetorical *majāz* and it the latter topic which is examined in Wolfhart Heinrichs’ study. The origin of the term *majāz* had previously been the subject of an extended treatment by Heinrichs in which he concluded that *majāz* technically connoted the explanatory rewriting of phrases, particularly idioms and other rather obscure forms of Qur’ānic expressions; and in this sense, it was primarily an instrument of grammatical resolution.²⁹⁹ With such a view Heinrichs countered Wansbrough’s argument that the term was initially linked with the process of grammatical suppletion or *taqdīr*. A previous study of the term by Almagor had concluded that the term was applied to qualify modes of expression. Such studies are significant in that they attempt to draw attention to the technical development of the terminology used by early exegetes. Subsequently, *majāz* was antithetically paired with the term *ḥaqīqa* and used to connote the veridical-metaphorical status of language, although Heinrichs showed that in Abū ‘Ubayda’s text, the employment of explanatory rewriting might include figurative language but this was incidental to its original function. He felt that the reasons for the term’s assumption of a theological function had to be sought in the activities of the Mu‘tazilites, who, by creating the notion of the *majāz* expression, were in a position to explain away conceptually the anthropomorphic imagery of scripture. In the current survey Heinrichs traces the literary theory of *majāz* as developed and articulated by a number of influential classical luminaries. In Haggai Ben-Shammai’s article an attempt is made to survey the status of literary forms of parable and simile (*mathal*) in early exegesis. Ben-Shammai draws attention to the theological strictures which were sometimes applied when dealing with the phenomenon of *mathal*.³⁰⁰

The history and origin of the practice of using poetry to elucidate the lexical import of words and phrases in the diction of the Qur'ān are themes explored in Issa J. Boullata's chapter. It is based on a study of a fifth/eleventh century medieval manuscript comprising the work originally ascribed to Ibn 'Abbās, *Masā'il Nāfi' ibn al-Azraq*, in which the practice of explaining lexical items in the Qur'ān through reference to poetry is justified; the tract was eventually preserved in al-Suyūṭī's *Itqān*.³⁰¹ Accepting the view that an accumulation of materials in the form of *loci probantes* attributed to figures such as Ibn 'Abbās had taken place over the centuries, Boullata advocates that the notion that the existence of an authentic core of materials originated with Ibn 'Abbās is not improbable, although the import of oral transmission in the dissemination of knowledge within traditional societies is viewed by Boullata as being important. It was Wansbrough who first argued that the use of poetry in exegetical treatises (especially masoretic works) was a later development and he had already concluded that the arguments adduced in the treatises ascribed to Ibn 'Abbās betrayed 'an exegetical method considerably posterior to the activity of Ibn 'Abbās'; and Rippin's work had likewise reached similar conclusions.³⁰² Rippin would argue that the inability to distinguish the inauthentic from the authentic materials undermines the value of a source in arguments about history, a point which Boullata also concedes.

Within the early Arabic linguistic tradition the use of poetry as an instrument for the elucidation of the language of the Qur'ān does not appear to have gone unchallenged. There are statements attributed to the Kufan philologist Abū Bakr ibn al-Anbārī (260–328/874–939) in which he sets out a convincing defence of the practice against the charge that by relying upon poetry in the form of *loci probantes* to explain aspects of the Qur'ānic diction, one had made profane poetry the basis (*aṣl*) of the Qur'ān (*al-kitāb*); the theological ramifications were significant. Ibn al-Anbārī counters this argument by invoking the authority of the Companions, to whom an abundance of materials on '*gharīb*' and '*mushkil*' is ascribed, arguing that their reflections therein are supported by the citation of poetry. One can certainly identify such opposition as a recurrent phenomenon with which scholars had to contend as opposed to constituting an early concern which disappears in the later exegetic tradition as the prolific use of poetry predominated within exegesis. And it is in the introduction to al-Naysābūrī's *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān* that the subsidiary function of *gharīb* as an instrument for the elucidation of elements of the Qur'ānic diction is reiterated.³⁰³ Also of interest is the fact that the use of poetry to justify *variae lectiones* was the subject of a protracted debate within the grammatical tradition with certain scholars objecting to the undermining of the linguistic configuration of readings on the basis of the attestation of poetic proofs (*shawāhid*).

The division of Qur'ānic verses into *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* categories by classical exegetes provides the central theme of Leah Kinberg's

comparative study.³⁰⁴ Her aim is to trace the trajectories of the discussions in the exegetical literature, thereby showing the diversity and differences which accompanied the exegetical definitions of these terms. The nexus between the concept of *mutashābihāt* and the theme of opposition to exegesis remained the subject of much debate. It was Goldziher who first claimed that the voluminous literature of *tafsīr* concealed the fact that initially scholarship in this discipline was actively discouraged by the Pious Ancestors and that opposition to its practice continued well into the second century; evidently, he had in mind the forms of *tafsīr* condemned in the statement of Ibn Ḥanbal and areas of exegesis made popular by the class of storytellers.³⁰⁵ And he refers to the questionable report in which (Ibn) Ṣabīgh was flayed by the second caliph ‘Umar for persistently asking questions about verses supposedly belonging to the realm of the *mutashābihāt*; Goldziher placed the discussions about opposition within the context of the tradition which censures *tafsīr bi’l-ra’y* to buttress his line of reasoning that during these formative periods opposition to *tafsīr* was intensely entrenched. His argument was challenged by Harris Birkeland in a study which took an in-depth look at the whole question of opposition against the interpretation of the Qur’ān in these periods. He largely dismissed the conclusions of Goldziher, proposing that the seeds of hostility towards the practice of *tafsīr* appeared only towards the end of the first/seventh century and that piety lay behind the reticence that scholars of a stern religiosity showed towards *tafsīr*, particularly against forms of exegesis which were championed by so-called heretics.³⁰⁶ Birkeland believed that a virtual consensus emerged vis-à-vis specified exegetical topics and explanations within each chapter of the Qur’ān at the beginning of the third/ninth century. However, the materials in the form of traditions associated with this consensus were normatively authenticated and attributed to the father of exegesis, Ibn ‘Abbās; Birkeland’s view was that these materials probably embodied common opinions on *tafsīr* held by scholars in traditionist circles, about 200 A.H. (815–6 C.E.), and they later surfaced in the work of al-Ṭabarī.

In her collection of monographs devoted to the study of Arabic papyri, the volume treating Qur’ānic commentary revisited the issue of opposition to *tafsīr*. Questioning the premises and conclusions reached by both Goldziher and Birkeland, Nabia Abbott argued that it was the Qur’ānic verses designated as being *mutashābihāt* around which opposition to *tafsīr* was constellated. But she speaks of its being symbolised by a somewhat guarded approach when encroaching upon the exegetical limits and sensitivities of such verses. Abbott did observe that it was paradoxical that cynosures who were spoken of as being ardent opponents of *tafsīr* happened to be the source of exegetical glosses and anecdotes conspicuously used to explicate verses. Revisiting this issue, Wansbrough’s placed the discussions on an entirely different plane, focusing on the design and content of the earliest literary texts. And in doing so he highlighted what he perceived to be methodological oversights which

plagued the approaches of both Birkeland and Abbott: namely, they invariably treated the traditional narratives as comprising authentic records of the early periods, and in Birkeland's case, this is true for the majority of the biographical reports upon which he relied to counter Goldziher's arguments.³⁰⁷ Indeed, Wansbrough even described Abbott's approach as being simplistic: in his view only the literary interrogation of the countenance of the extant sources could uncover the significance of the exegetical ideas and views expressed in the literature. His own findings led him to speculate about the emergence of canon. A fleeting review of the content of early *tafsīr* literature confirms that the *muḥkam-mutashābih* antithesis in its later expression was hardly a construct which arrested the pursuit of *tafsīr*; it had a largely symbolic function with regards to the identification of types of verses. In Kinberg's article it is argued that the *muḥkam-mutashābih* antithesis allowed a resourceful configuration of exegetical activity which medieval scholarship expediently utilised to pursue all sorts of exegetical leads.³⁰⁸

Further analysis of the concepts of *Muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* is developed by Jane McAuliffe in a chapter which sums up their wider hermeneutical implications. With reference to a number of twentieth-century critical literary discourses, she is interested in exploring the potential role the concepts play in 'constructing bridges between medieval commentaries and contemporary theories.' Interestingly, McAuliffe does conclude the chapter by remarking that classical commentators found in the juxtaposition of ideas about *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* an 'opportunity for the kind of full intellectual, moral, and spiritual engagement that the text incessantly demands'; it was this very point which formed part of the wider treatment of the potential of the taxonomy by al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, outlined above. The hermeneutical continuum which unambiguously links the works of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr is a theme reviewed in a further contribution by McAuliffe. It is intriguing to note that McAuliffe explains that al-Ṭabarī's commentary is instinctively viewed as being an important example of *al-tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr*, but as she emphasises it is so much more than simply a collection of traditional dicta. This in many ways highlights the fact that such labels do tend to be misleading when applied to the extant exegetical literature.

Moving away from the more theoretical aspects of Qur'ānic hermeneutics to a more general issue of interpretation, it is the subject of *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*, as treated by al-Ghazālī in his *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, which is discussed in the contribution by Muhammad Abul Quasem.³⁰⁹ It is posited that although al-Ghazālī did not bequeath an exclusive commentary, he did leave a number of treatises such as the *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān* and other works from which his thoughts on exegetical issues and topics can be distilled, showing that his exegetical legacy is quite substantial. The suggestion is that through an analysis of the arguments about *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*, al-Ghazālī was able to illustrate that when properly regulated, such circumspect forms of exegesis were entirely normative and legitimate; and that there was no other way of meaningfully

engaging with the Qur'ān. Moreover, he went on to argue that forms of Ṣūfī exegesis which probed for latent meanings of the text were equally valid if earnestly broached. Abul Quasem takes the view that al-Ghazālī's contribution to the debate lay in his systematisation of exegetical ideals already formulated by earlier generations of Ṣūfī exegetes. Staying with the figure of al-Ghazālī, Mesut Okumuş's study attempts to show the extent to which the framework of Qur'ānic hermeneutics which he adopted was influenced by the philosopher Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1037).³¹⁰ Classical as well as modern scholarship had long recognised that certain aspects of al-Ghazālī's thought was heavily influenced by Ibn Sīnā, and in this chapter Mesut Okumuş traces influences in al-Ghazālī's treatment of exegetical themes which are linked to discussions about the existence of God and the divine attributes through reference to the Qur'ān's Light Chapter, Q. 24:35, and his *Mishkāt al-anwār*. Authorial intention within the framework of the modern hermeneutic argument which predicates that a text's meaning rests upon the ideas (or sign sequence) which the author intended to convey as opposed to the ideas inferred from the text by the reader or interpreter serves as the backdrop to Ulrika Mårtensson's examination of the exegesis of Q. 24:35 (the 'Light Verse') by both al-Ṭabarī and al-Ghazālī. Mårtensson posits that the two scholars' approach to the explication of these verses is commensurate with the modern hermeneutic concept of authorial intention.³¹¹ She does situate her treatment within the vector of arguments about the semantic compass of *ta'wīl* as understood by classical exegetes as representing a quest for the intended meaning; and also highlighted is the notion that Ismā'īlī exegesis of the Qur'ān evinces a distinct exemplification of the hegemony of the interpreter as the source of meaning.

The epistemic value of language within Qur'ānic commentary is dealt with in Versteegh's study of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's exegesis of the opening chapter of the Qur'ān.³¹² Versteegh is interested not only in the way that al-Rāzī's training as a legal theorist is reflected in the definitions he postulates, but also in the developments across the various disciplines of learning in the fourth/tenth century and particularly the manner by which leading grammarians of Mu'tazilite leanings were influencing the theoretical discourses of the period. This is followed by Hartmut Bobzin's study of the use of variant readings in the popular and influential commentary entitled, *Tafsīr al-jalālayn*, which was composed by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī (d. 864/1459).³¹³ Bobzin is particularly interested in the manner by which such readings are used to illustrate Qur'ānic glosses.

Classical debates surrounding the corpus of *isrā'īlīyāt* and their historical roots as ancillary exegetical aids are the focus of two separate studies: the first of which is by Jane McAuliffe and she chooses to analyse successive exegetical treatments of Q.2:67–73, one of the set of verses highlighted by Ibn Taymiyya in his *Muqaddima* as an example of a pericope which, in his view, had attracted much worthless and banal speculation on the part of

classical exegetes. McAuliffe seeks to investigate how references to the *isrāʿīlīyāt* impacted upon successive commentators' treatment of these verses in the light of Ibn Taymiyya's claim that such musings engendered nothing but futile exegetical divergences (*ikhṭilāf*).³¹⁴ She ponders the profounder implications of the expressions of opposition to the use of these materials and questions why such a hermeneutic of denial was sustained, although one does need to bear in mind that despite such warnings the materials continued to be used in ways which were productive. In Roberto Tottoli's contribution a survey of the origins of the term *isrāʿīlīyāt* and its attestation in the early and classical literature is extended to include attitudes to the *isrāʿīlīyāt* in the more recent exegetical sources.³¹⁵ Distinctly related to the preceding discussions are the arguments surrounding the use of the Bible as a critical analogue for the interpretation of the Qurʾān as advocated by the Egyptian exegete, al-Biqāʿī, and these are considered in Walid Saleh's study. Al-Biqāʿī, was the author of a treatise entitled *al-Aqwāl al-qawīmah fī ḥukm al-naql min al-kutub al-qadīma* in which he defended the use of the Bible as a basis for the interpretation of the Qurʾān. He had made illustrious use of the technique in his seminal commentary, *Naẓm al-Durar fī tanāsub al-ayyāt waʾl-suwar*. Saleh weighs up the wider implications of al-Biqāʿī's insistence on using the Bible as a 'proof text', noting that he was not only quoting from Biblical scriptures verbatim, but also often superseding Islamic narratives.³¹⁶ Al-Biqāʿī was heavily criticised by his peers but he defended his position, prompting numerous legal edicts and acrid discussions in which the distinguished traditionist and historian al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497), along with a number of other notable figures, emerged as vociferous opponents. Saleh noted that modern scholarship has principally focused on al-Biqāʿī's involvement in Ṣūfī and philosophical controversies: he had subjected the mystic Ibn al-Fārīḍ (576–632/1181–1235) to excoriating criticism; Saleh expresses the view that his exciting exegetical legacy has been largely overlooked despite its enormity. He argues that *tafsīr* provided a unique setting for the promulgation of ideas and standpoints of a non-exegetical flavour and in this sense it preserves significant aspects of the cultural development of Islamic intellectual history; indeed, the exegetical thought of al-Biqāʿī together with his legacy serves as a useful demonstration of this fact. Somewhat related to the aforementioned discussions is Andrew Rippin's study which reviews the identification of foreign exegetical items in Qurʾānic exegesis through the work of the polymath Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, who authored a number of related treatises. Rippin explores the role such exegetical processes played in classical scholars' attempt to find various solutions to issues of interpretation, which were then given broader contextual import. Rippin sees the discipline of *tafsīr* as being characterised by an acquisitive dynamic which accentuated the ideals of applied relevance and he concluded that the concept of the foreign word provided an apposite framework for situating the explanations of meanings.³¹⁷

Another important exegetical category is the *asbāb al-nuzūl*, which formed a salient area of focus within Qur'ānic commentaries.³¹⁸ In his article Rippin contended that the *asbāb al-nuzūl* materials in question were not halakhic in origin in terms of their being of functional relevance to the legal treatment of the Qur'ān as suggested by Wansbrough, regardless of the sub-genres in which they appear, but rather they were haggadic in countenance and probably promulgated by storytellers and preachers for their edifying utility. The exegetical genre of abrogation is the subject of David Powers' study and in it he reviews the historical relevance of the different literature devoted to *naskh*.³¹⁹ His aim is to evaluate classical perceptions and applications of this doctrine in the traditional discourses, drawing attention to the way patterns of a theory of abrogation fit in with the textual history of the Qur'ān and its emergence as canon.

It has been suggested that the Mu'tazilīte contribution to the classical scholarship of exegesis has been only fleetingly explored in modern academic scholarship with the work of al-Zamakhsharī often providing the principal focal point of attention. Of course, in all forms of classical Islamic scholarship the contribution to theoretical and practical discourses is not exclusively defined by preconceived theological propensities. Yet, recent studies of a number of exegetical treatises composed by Mu'tazilīte authors do reveal interesting nuances within syntheses of theory and methodology. An important Mu'tazilīte *tafsīr* is the unpublished commentary of al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī, whose work has been the subject of a number of detailed studies by Suleiman Mourad, who explains that while al-Zamakhsharī rarely identifies the exegetical views of his Mu'tazilīte cohorts, al-Jishumī provides details of the actual authors of various exegetical glosses.³²⁰ The contribution by Mourad represents a serious attempt to offer an appraisal of al-Jishumī's legacy, reviewing the hermeneutical strictures which he brought to bear in his exegetical treatment of the Qur'ān. General hermeneutical principles applied by exegetes are also explored through the translation of two key texts by Jane McAuliffe, the first of which consists of a section of Ibn Taymiyya's famous *Muqaddima fī uṣūl al-tafsīr* followed by a translation and commentary based on the introduction to the *tafsīr* composed by the Ḥanbalite scholar Ibn al-Jawzī.³²¹ The introduction to the commentary *Anwār al-tanzīl*, composed by the Shāfi'ite exegete al-Bayḍāwī, is the subject of Yusuf Rahman's study which offers a tentative sketch of the hermeneutical bases of the commentary. The work is viewed as being typically Ash'ārīte in its theological outlook and heavily reliant on the compilations of his predecessors, al-Rāzī and al-Zamakhsharī, yet as Rahman points out, al-Bayḍāwī does adhere to an elaborate methodology throughout the text which he carefully outlined in his introduction.³²²

The common theme of the final three chapters of this volume is provided by overall frameworks of method and theory within Qur'ānic hermeneutics, beginning with an attempt by Yeshayahu Goldfeld to explain the genesis of

classical Islamic exegetical concepts in the light of Jewish antecedents. Interestingly, while modern scholarship has been sceptical of the claims made in the later sources about the historical status of figures such as Ibn ‘Abbās and the existence of early treatises and tracts, Goldfeld takes a very positive view of the reliability of the traditional sources, identifying a distinct measure of accuracy in the transmission of early exegetical texts.³²³ Referring to the *tafsīr* of Ibn ‘Abbās, he speculates that ‘a degree of augmentation, interpolation, and editing had probably accompanied the transmitted original’, but nevertheless an original text did exist.³²⁴ He argues that exegetical precepts employed by Ibn ‘Abbās were in point of fact sourced from Judeo-Christian concepts of scriptural interpretation. It is through the introduction to Muqātil’s *tafsīr*, whose methodology is seen as encapsulating the Jewish theory of exegesis as refined by the Soferim, that Goldfeld gauges the trajectories of this assumed nexus. Gregor Schwarb’s extended study is also based on a comparative approach which analyses the interdependence defining the classical articulation of legal hermeneutics and the principles of exegesis in Islamic and Jewish scholarship.³²⁵ Schwarb is concerned with examining facets of the interplay between *uṣūl al-fiqh* and *uṣūl al-tafsīr* in the context of literature of the fourth/tenth and fifth/eleventh centuries. The final chapter of the volume is a study by Peter Heath of the hermeneutical processes applied by al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Sīnā, and Ibn ‘Arabī in the exegesis of a Qur’ānic pericope.³²⁶ While the study is principally concerned with the broader implications of the significance of Islamic interpretational methods, with the aim of promoting a trans-disciplinary comparison, it does offer a synthesis of the general critical basis which allows interpretation to facilitate dialectically generative processes.

The scholarship of *tafsīr* with regards to principal commentators and their commentaries provides the focus for many of the chapters in Volume III of the Collection. The general context to most of the themes, personalities, and works examined in this volume’s chapters has already been touched upon in the former part of the introduction. It is the legacy of Muqātil ibn Sulaymān which features in the first two contributions, beginning with Nabia Abbott’s edition of folios from his treatise *al-Wujūh wa’l-naẓā’ir*, which is derived from her larger work on *Arabic Literary Papyri: Qur’ānic Commentary*. It includes discussions of the development of *tafsīr* and Abbott’s thoughts on the issue of opposition to *tafsīr* in the early periods and its probable links with the issue of the interpretation of *mutashābihāt* verses. Changes in attitudes towards the exegete Muqātil in the later historical periods are examined in Mehmet Koç’s article, which outlines reasons for these developments. Koç advocates the view that there may have been common theological affinities between Muqātil and later exegetes who set about invigorating and restoring Muqātil’s legacy within exegesis. Walid Saleh has observed that al-Tha’labī had been influential in propagating the exegesis of Muqātil; Koç concludes that all such observations have implications for the history of

exegesis.³²⁷ The biographical sources tell of the intriguing historical relationship between Muqātil and his predecessor al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim: the former claimed to have studied with him, although there are discrepancies in the data of which biographers were suspicious. And, it is al-Ḍaḥḥāk's putative *tafsīr*, as collated from disparate sources, which is meticulously mined by Versteegh for its discussion of linguistic concepts.³²⁸ This chapter is followed by Mårtensson's preliminary study which, through reference to the notion of authorial intention, probes the relationship between Aristotle's *Politics and Rhetoric* and elements of the hermeneutical thrust of al-Ṭabarī's commentary and the Qur'ān. Her approach does illustrate some of the fascinating structural features of al-Ṭabarī's commentary.³²⁹ Another significant scholar whose importance has been hitherto overlooked in studies of *tafsīr* is the exegete from Nīshāpūr, al-Wāḥidī, whose life and works are examined by Walid Saleh in a chapter which also assesses the strength of his intellectual legacy. Assessing the distinction of his oeuvre, Saleh maintains that al-Wāḥidī deserves to be considered one of the seminal exegetes of medieval Islam.³³⁰ Striking a more general note, Saleh draws attention to the fact that so much of the written legacy of *tafsīr* has yet to be published and therefore, in many senses, current scholarship's understanding of the relationship which defines the different exegetical works, sub-genres, and authors, together with its appreciation of the extent of the discipline's wider influence within the context of Islamic thought, remains somewhat provisional. And key to Saleh's overview of *tafsīr* is the belief that the commentary of the 'Nishapuri' school ushers in a highly classical style of *tafsīr* with the work of al-Tha'labī being distinctively radical in that it transformed the parameters of the scholarship associated with medieval Qur'ānic commentary.³³¹ This of course has ramifications for the idea that the legacy of al-Ṭabarī was so commanding in the history of classical *tafsīr*.

The designation of *tafsīr* as a genre together with problems encountered when developing a description of its formal characteristics are assessed in a study by Norman Calder.³³² Proceeding on the basis that the most fundamental character of the genre was the presence of canon, segmentation, lemma, and comment, Calder explores some of the tensions inherent within the genre, asserting that works in which such structures were not systematically present did not belong to the genre, but rather to its margins. He argues that polyvalence, in terms of presenting the gamut of views held with regards to different verses, was a defining feature of the classical works being creatively synthesised by al-Qurṭubī, whose work provides a superlative example of what the genre could achieve. He also stresses the point that the 'qualities which distinguish one *mufasssīr* from another lie less in their conclusions as to what the Qur'ānic text means than in their development and display of techniques which mark their participation in and mastery of a literary discipline.' Moreover, it is the individual mastery of both al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurṭubī which Calder sets out to highlight. Calder does suggest that

until the period of Ibn Kathīr, the exegesis or measuring of the Qur'ānic text was set around certain broad categories: orthography, lexis, syntax, rhetoric, symbol/allegory, which he defined under the heading instrumental structures and ideological structures, which included prophetic history, theology, eschatology, law and *taṣawwuf*. Intriguingly, these categories seemingly matched those circumscribed by Ibn Juzayy above. Particular significance is attached to the fact that the aforementioned subjects were independently studied for their own sake and permitted of indefinite extension beyond the constraints of the Qur'ānic text. Calder would argue that such an observation emphasises the independence provided by the discipline of *tafsīr* insofar as a text devoted to the subject represented a work of art, allowing given authors the licence to display the virtuosity of their approaches.

Commentaries and scholarship associated with Shī'ite, Ismā'īlī, and Mu'tazilite figures and thought are explored in the next selection of chapters. A survey is provided of the *tafsīr* ascribed to the eleventh Imām al-Ḥasan al-'Askarī by Meir Bar-Asher, who argues that the work comprises materials which link it to the era in which al-'Askarī lived, making it an historically important text. Whether it can be accommodated with Calder's definition of *tafsīr* in terms of structure and contents is a moot point.³³³ Underlining the fact that there existed a broad spectrum of views prevalent with Ismā'īlism, Azim Nanji reviews its treatment of key Qur'ānic concepts, using them to illustrate the general thrust of Ismā'īlī approaches to Qur'ānic interpretation.³³⁴ Kristan Sands' chapter discusses the popularity of a Persian commentary on the Qur'ān composed by Ḥusayn Vā'iz-i Khashafī (d. 910/1504–5). The work, entitled *Mavālib-I 'aliyya*, successfully combined Ṣūfī themes with an eloquently composed narrative which avoided polemical matters, making the text popular among Shī'ite and Sunnī audiences.³³⁵ This is followed by a chapter in which Suleiman Mourad seeks to demonstrate the traces of Mu'tazilite influences in the works of the Shī'ite exegete al-Ṭabrisī and the Sunnī figure Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, using the commentary of al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī to shed some light on the survival of Mu'tazilite ideas within exegesis. The chapter is preceded by a second contribution in which Mourad presents a comparative study of five exegetical glosses of Q. 3:178 from the work of al-Jishumī.³³⁶ An even earlier commentary in which theological discussions resonated among the more generic narrative themes of *tafsīr* is provided in Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī's *Ta'wīlāt ahl al-Sunna*.³³⁷ In a detailed study of the work by Manfred Götz it is suggested that the work is invaluable for the intellectual history of classical theology, in that it preserves disputes attributed to Mu'tazilite scholars and advocates of a strictly corporeal and literalist approach to theology. Yet notwithstanding the text's theological value, its coverage of conventional themes is significant for it comprises exegetical materials derived from earlier authors. Switching focus to another seminal author, the exegetical legacy of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī has been examined in a number of studies by Jacques Jomier, and in this

contribution an assessment is made of the sources of the work and the uniqueness of its approach.³³⁸

Topics relating to Ṣūfī *tafsīr* are the subject of a number of studies in this volume. Certainly, Calder has drawn attention to the problems of description within genres of *tafsīr* and even argued that mystical *tafsīrs* such as al-Tustarī's work do not exhibit sufficiently sustained treatments of sections of the Qur'ān and are therefore marginal works within the genre.³³⁹ Still, historically, esoteric exegesis or *tafsīr ishārī* as practised by Ṣūfī luminaries did have its defenders and detractors both in the formative and later periods; its proponents shared the view that its paradigms and conceptual trajectories have their origins in the early tradition. The work of Gerhard Böwering has been especially influential in drawing attention to and providing syntheses of the features of early Ṣūfī *tafsīr*: his study of the work of al-Tustarī remains one of the most seminal academic examinations of the genre. In his contribution to this section Böwering presents a study of the minor commentary composed by al-Sulamī, the author of the famous *Ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr*, which preserved a repository of Ṣūfī exegetical sources attributed to early mystics. Böwering explains that the minor *tafsīr*, which was referred to as *Ziyādāt ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr*, was written to serve as a supplement to the former work and its importance rests in the fact that it adumbrates the exegetical musings of previous mystics as opposed to al-Sulamī's own interpretations.³⁴⁰ The question of whether Ṣūfī *tafsīr* can be considered a discrete genre of *tafsīr* is addressed in the contribution by Jamal Elias, who argues that the individual treatises produced by Ṣūfī figures often focused on concerns which may well have been broadly aesthetic as opposed to being informed by strictly doctrinal concerns and exigencies; on this basis, he argues that such forms of exegesis fall within the subsectional margins of the genre of *tafsīr*. Issues of classification should not detract from the intrinsic value of such works, which are delicately geared towards uncovering the veiled meanings of the text, but Elias' point is that such works do not belong to a separate exegetical class of writings. In his chapter Muhammad Abul Quasem made the point that although al-Ghazālī never composed an actual *tafsīr*, the many works he authored such as his *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, *Mishkāṭ al-anwār*, *Iljām al-'awāmm 'an 'ilm al-kalām*, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, and *Qānūn al-ta'wīl* do include a treasure trove of his thoughts on exegesis. It is al-Ghazālī's theory of esoteric exegesis as distilled from his written legacy which is given thought in Nicholas Heer's study with the aim of shedding light on its principal features.³⁴¹ Based on a study of the *Laṭā'if al-ishārāt* of al-Qushayrī, Annabel Keeler's contribution examines the notion that Ṣūfī interpretation of the Qur'ān mirrors the individual spiritual outlook and preoccupations of the actual 'interpreter'. Keeler also assesses the role of its author as a *murshid* (spiritual guide) and the influence of the religious and cultural milieu of Khurāsān.³⁴² The preconceptions brought to the interpretation of the Qur'ān by various exegetes, particularly with regards to philosophical, mystical, and even

theological prejudices, are touched upon in Sajjad Rizvi's study of 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī's exegesis of the *basmala* within the specific context of the opening chapter of the Qur'ān. Referring to the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* and its chapter on the Prophet Zechariah, Rizvi demonstrates how his treatment is a reflection of the metaphysics of the school of Ibn 'Arabi.³⁴³

Philosophical exegesis together with the contribution to its synthesis by Ya'qūb ibn Ishāq al-Kindī (d. c. 256/870) and Ibn Sīnā is the subject of two separate studies by Jules Janssens.³⁴⁴ Notwithstanding the fact that examples of such exegesis are often restricted to individual verses and are hardly sustained treatments of consecutive segments of the Qur'ān, Janssens argues that such scholars are offering *sui generis* approaches to issues of interpretation informed by specific ideological concerns and are worthy of study as a unique sub-genre. In the first of his two contributions he presents a study of the significance of al-Kindī's exegesis of specific verses and his role as a pioneer in nurturing exegetical ideas, the intricate threads of which were taken up by Ibn Sīnā and it is this figure's work which is carefully scrutinised in Janssens's second article. The final contribution to the volume is Todd Lawson's study of the Bāb's *tafsīr* of two short chapters of the Qur'ān. It has been argued that such descriptions of *tafsīr* do stretch the elasticity of the genre of commentaries both in terms of their form and content, but Lawson argues that Qur'ān commentary played a significant role in the development of the *Bābī* movement.³⁴⁵ Indeed he notes that the Bāb's own commentaries of Qur'ānic verses, which were bereft of any professionally derived understanding of the text, were innovative and popular among the movement. The disjunction between such forms of '*tafsīr*' and traditionally based treatments of Qur'ānic narratives is self-evident.

Studies of general exegetical topics, themes, and approaches which predominate within the overall framework of classical *tafsīr* scholarship form the bulk of the contents of the final volume of the Collection, although it should be borne in mind that issues covered in Volumes III and IV do overlap considerably as the tenor of themes tackled between them is frequently contiguous, despite the former being generally devoted to commentators and their commentaries and the latter following up on themes or specific topics within a scholar's work; modern issues within exegesis are covered as a subject in Part VI of the volume. Under the heading Topics and Themes of Exegesis, Part V begins with a study by Anthony Johns, who revisits exegetical accounts of the Qur'ānic pericope on Solomon and the horses. Johns is mainly concerned with probing deliberate shifts in the accommodation of spiritual as well as ideological exigencies in Muslim intellectual history, highlighting the individuality and creativeness which different exegetes needed to foster when interpreting the Qur'ān. In many ways Johns' observations capture the dynamic which lay at the heart of the Muslim exegetical tradition: namely, its ability to build upon the traditional emblems of exegetical narratives and invigorate them in ways which make them relevant to new

discourses and settings. Shifts in interpretation are likewise probed in Andrew Rippin's study of how and why the figure of Samson was treated in classical and *tafsīr* literature. Samson is not mentioned by name in the Qur'ān but both al-Ṭabarī and al-Tha'labī made him the subject of detailed narratives.³⁴⁶ The wider import of the metamorphosis of the interpretation of narratives propelled by 'finding what needs to be found' is a key theme of the chapter. Issues concerning the paradigm within which the academic study of religion is currently situated are also given thought.³⁴⁷

Developments within literary Qur'ānic interpretation are explored in Mahmoud Ayoub's contribution, which attempts to gauge them through the distinct contributions to the scholarship made by the fourth/tenth century scholar al-Sharīf al-Raḍī. Ayoub focuses not only on his literary accomplishments, but also takes into consideration theological factors which shaped al-Raḍī's thought. This is pursued through reference to his works which include *Talkhīṣ al-bayān fī majāzāt al-Qur'ān*, *Majāzāt al-āthār al-nabawiyya*, and the published volume of his larger *tafsīr*. Aspects of al-Raḍī's exegetical methodology are discussed in light of his understanding of both the technical connotation of *ta'wīl* and the class of verses designated as belonging to the *mutashābihāt*.³⁴⁸ Ayoub does take the opportunity to cover al-Raḍī's approach to issues which impinge upon Christological debates. The hermeneutical tenets which informed the conceptual bases of the *tafsīr* entitled *Mafātīḥ al-asrār wa-maṣābīḥ al-abrār* which was composed by al-Shahrastānī, the author of the renowned work on heresiography *al-Milal wa'l-niḥal*, are the subject of a preliminary evaluation in Toby Mayer's study.³⁴⁹ Crucially, Mayer argues that while a form of Ismā'īlī gnosis was a distinct complement of al-Shahrastānī's theological affiliations, his outlook and approach to *tafsīr* remained inexorably informed by a paradigm of eclecticism in which traditional narratives were still made utterly relevant to the general thrust of his exegetical strategy in this esoteric commentary. Theology is a central theme of the next chapter which probes the regular criticisms levelled at the commentary of al-Zamakhsharī in the classical Sunnī literature. Traditional literature does entertain the claim that it was replete with explanations which were shaped by the Mu'tazilite leanings of the work's author. Indeed, those commentaries which incorporated and built upon the themes elucidated in the work of al-Zamakhsharī often boast of the fact that such leanings had been expunged when integrating, assimilating, and developing its ideas, although the fact that it was essentially a literary commentary alleviated some of the sensitivities surrounding its being pooled for materials. Andrew Lane has been particularly interested in drawing attention to the arguments, first articulated in the classical sources and repeated within modern scholarly circles, about the Mu'tazilite nature of al-Zamakhsharī's *tafsīr*. Lane argues that the proposition that the work was Mu'tazilite in terms of its theological orientation was inferred not from a close reading of the text, but simply based on an acceptance of the medieval biographical materials in which the

author is castigated; Lane questions whether *al-Kashshāf* actually evinces an overtly Mu'tazilite theology and dialectic, arguing that the criteria for classifying the commentary as such are too vague and that in essence it should be viewed as being a standard work which occasionally assimilates Mu'tazilite ideas into a traditional framework.³⁵⁰ A close reading of two Sūras of the Qur'ān is offered to demonstrate his main argument.

The manner by which Qur'ānic commentary is used to evaluate not only historical narratives but also to illustrate through a process of comparison the phenomenon of differentiation which disentangles the import of the Qur'ān as an autonomous text and the layers of meaning which successive generations of exegetes imposed upon its narratives via interpretation has featured prominently in the work of Uri Rubin; he is specifically interested in locating an original connotation which is embedded in the Qur'ān's discourse and not the works of the exegetes *per se*.³⁵¹ In his article Rubin reviews the historical implications of the exegetical musings over the Qur'ānic reference, Q.2: 198, and the fact that exegetes, through the attestation of traditional dicta, supported the view that the verse tacitly approved of the combination of trade with the performance of the pilgrimage. Among the conclusions reached by Rubin is that Mecca was originally a pilgrim fair and that the concession to trade was developed in later exegetical discussions. The finding leads him to question the thesis advanced by Patricia Crone, which counters this view of the Meccan sanctuary and the other stations associated with the *Hajj* as places of pilgrimage. Another interesting use of exegetical discussions to unravel what is believed to be the original intent of Qur'ānic verses is attempted in Stefan Wild's review of Q.3:7. Wild sets out to clarify the scriptural prehistory of the verse and its treatment by classical exegetes, placing the discussions within the confines of the notion of the Qur'ān's self-referentiality.³⁵² In Gerhard Böwering's study it is Sūfī interpretations of 'the Light Verse' which are analysed. Referring to an original substrate for the verse's import and the inevitable shifts from exegesis to eisegesis, Böwering argues that the allegorical explanations refined by Sūfīs to flesh out narratives of the Light Verse owe their provenance to a Christian dialectical context.³⁵³ Aspects of the relationship between the Qur'ān and its commentaries together with the act of interpretation as a tool to buttress the authority of the exegete are reviewed in Brannon Wheeler's chapter. He explains that nineteenth century perceptions that the Qur'ān and its corpora of commentaries miscomprehended materials derived from Jewish and Christian sources have tended to obscure the nexus between the Qur'ān, its commentaries, and other forms of extra-Qur'ānic sources. Wheeler's view is that via elaborate processes of interpretation, commentators were able to create for themselves paradigms of authority.³⁵⁴ Sūfī interpretations of the opening chapter of the Qur'ān which feature in al-Sulamī's *Ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr* are explored in Mohammed Rustum's study for their relevance to developments of the concept of gnosis in Sūfī *tafsīr*;

furthermore, Rustum weighs up the individual authority of al-Sulamī as a Ṣūfī commentator.³⁵⁵

Topics and themes of a more specific variety are tackled in the next selection of chapters. The first of which is Gordon Nickel's examination of the notion of *tahrīf*: namely, the idea that previous Jewish and Christian scriptures had been corrupted or falsified over time, with reference to the work of the exegete Muqātil ibn Sulaymān. Nickel takes the view that the author's understanding of *tahrīf* differs from later expressions of the notion and this very fact has implications for developments in the way the notion of *tahrīf* was interpreted by later exegetes.³⁵⁶ Jane McAuliffe's chapter presents case studies of select references in the Qur'ān and *tafsīr* to Christians in the commentaries of three luminaries: al-Ṭabarī, al-Rāzī, and al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī. Her aim is to exemplify attitudes to Christians and Christianity within expressions of classical Muslim thought, dwelling upon the polemics of perception and other factors governing approaches to interpretation.³⁵⁷ Interestingly, it was polemical reasons which lay behind the decision by Peter the Venerable (1092–94/1156) to commission Robert of Ketton (flor. 1136–57) to produce a Latin translation of the Qur'ān as part of a project to translate classical Islamic texts. Ketton, who was otherwise famed for his renditions of Arabic scientific texts, was criticised by a number of medieval writers for his having produced a translation which to all intents and purposes constituted an exuberant paraphrasing of the original. The issues surrounding the translation and the subject of its achievement are considered by Thomas Burman. While not questioning the characterisation of Ketton's effort, which was the first complete translation of the Qur'ān into a Western language, Burman argues that there were subtle influences which accounted for the rendition produced by Ketton: namely, the fact that he had relied heavily upon the works of classical exegetes in determining the countenance of his translation and so the paraphrasing for which he is criticised overshadows the intricacy of the efforts of Ketton and to an extent the sources utilized for his effort, which is compared with the translation by Mark of Toledo (flor. 1193–1216). Questions raised by Burman's study include the role and impact which classical commentaries have had upon endeavours in the area of translations of the Qur'ān, principally given the differences expressed among commentators as to the import of key words and phrases and issues of subjectivity; broader implications for more contemporary efforts are also discussed.³⁵⁸ It is the theme of astrology which is reflected upon in Robert Morrison's survey of how the early exegetes dealt with the subject in their commentaries.³⁵⁹ Morrison pays specific attention to the late antique context which provided the backdrop to the various discussions, probing differences between theologians and exegetes à propos the science of astrology. Fascinatingly, Morrison shows that exegetes tended to be less hostile to the science than their theologian cohorts, who voiced objections to the fact that the causal framework informing astrological discussions and predications impinged upon theological conceptions

of divine omnipotence. Exegetes on the other hand accepted that there was an overall theoretical pertinence to astrology, despite their harbouring reservations about its broader function. The final chapter of Part V features a chapter by Karen Bauer which considers the matter of whether the works on *tafsīr* from the fifth/eleventh and sixth/twelfth centuries were produced with a non-specialist audience in mind.³⁶⁰ Bauer develops the argument that such works were actually intended for a specialised audience. The context for this survey is the question of the centrality of *tafsīr* works to Muslim intellectual life as defined by Walid Saleh's characterisation of *tafsīr* with reference to its function within the wider community. He had attached marked significance to the terms '*madrasa*' and 'encyclopedic' to identify the audiences (and levels) for whom such works were intended. The introductions to *tafsīr* often include comments lamenting the fact that readers were not equipped to deal with voluminous works and Bauer seeks to show that although such commentaries were widely read, their characterisation remains quite complex due to the sophistication of the different forms of the texts. Of course, one needs to bear in mind that Bauer is principally concerned with the legacy of the exegetes from 'Nishapur', whose contribution to the study of *tafsīr* during this historical period was incontrovertibly immense, although the scholarship of *tafsīr* has an incredibly extensive geographical and historical compass.

The final part of Volume IV is devoted to issues and approaches which feature in discussions of modern Qur'ānic hermeneutics. The question of identifying a modern system of hermeneutics through which engagement with the Qur'ān as a living text can be developed is tackled in Farid Esack's article.³⁶¹ Esack suggests that hermeneutical strategies have been somewhat shackled by the tendency to take into account traditional approaches to the concept of the Qur'ān's inimitability and theological discussions germane to the doctrine of the eternity of the Qur'ān when developing strategies. He argues that this factor raises the question of what constitutes an authentic appreciation of the Qur'ān and facilitates a recovery of its meaning, especially in the context of the discourse of reform and modernity.³⁶² Contemporary debates germane to how one approaches the interpretation of the Qur'ān also feature in Abdullah Saeed's contribution in which he outlines the specifics of a contextualist approach to the interpretation of the Qur'ān.³⁶³ Saeed explains that in such readings the ethico-legal context of the text is accentuated in ways which take into account the changing dynamic of conditions and circumstance. The suggestion is that in classical *tafsīr* appreciation of the socio-historical context attached to scripture was non-existent and Saeed seeks to explain the complexity of the challenges proponents of the contextualist approach invidiously face. Against the backdrop of the primacy of traditionalist models of Qur'ānic interpretation in the modern Islamic world, recent trends within Qur'ānic hermeneutics from the nineteenth century until the present are explored in Erik Ohlander's survey, which sheds light on modernist, Islamist, scientist, traditionalist, revisionist, and feminist

exegetical strategies. Ohlander notes that despite the hegemony which the traditionalist model retains, new ideas and approaches are being countenanced. Reformist thought and its relation to Qur'ānic interpretation as articulated in the work of Nasr Abu Zayd provides the focal point for Massimo Campanini's chapter. The relationship between strategies for the contemporary interpretation of the Qur'ān and new perspectives on political reform forms an important component of Campanini's treatment.³⁶⁴ The final chapter in the volume and the Collection features Johanna Pink's study of the notions of tradition, authority, and innovation in modern *tafsīr* literature. Her aim is to explore the dynamic which shaped the production of *tafsīr* under the condition of the modern state, using modern works written in Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, and Turkish. Using the exegetical discussions of the interpretive quandaries presented by Q.9:111–12, Pink takes the opportunity to draw attention to regional tendencies which are inherent in contemporary exegesis and some of the strictures imposed by the genre.³⁶⁵

The sophistication and quality of the profusion of literary works devoted to *tafsīr* serve to underline its enduring historical legacy. The Shāfi'ite exegete al-Bayḍāwī (d. c. 716/1316) once described the discipline of *tafsīr* as the most magnificent of the sciences in respect of its scope and the most distinguished in terms of its superiority and status, adding that it rests as the veritable head of the religious sciences; it was a view shared by so many of his peers and predecessors.³⁶⁶ Across the early, classical, and modern historical periods, exegesis of the sacred text was not vapidly confined to a dutiful recounting of the corpora of exegetical statements bequeathed by earlier scholarship, but, additionally, it turned on the constructive assimilation of resources, paradigms, and ideas, employing linguistic, narrative, legal, theological, mystical, and rhetorical frameworks of reference to clarify, contextualise, and venerate the Qur'ān. Accordingly, the vitality of the discipline of *tafsīr* is reflected in its ability to inspire, while also providing a unique forum for contributions to the intellectual discourses of Islamic thought. Interestingly, Harris Birkeland once remarked in a 1956 publication that following the work of al-Ṭabarī, al-Zamakhsharī, and al-Rāzī essentially nothing new has entered orthodox *tafsīr*, adding that 'later commentators chiefly copy and rearrange or make abridgements of older works.'³⁶⁷ There is a tendency to view the early and medieval traditions of exegesis as encapsulating a stagnant enterprise in which scholars haphazardly disseminated the endeavours of earlier luminaries, demonstrating little originality or imagination. While such impressions of *tafsīr* underestimate the distinctiveness and richness of the genre and the fecund vein of associated literature and scholarship it inspired, they were to an extent influenced by the fact that a large portion of the materials of the discipline remained in manuscript form. The wealth of *tafsīr* texts currently available is truly striking and this is despite the fact that vast amounts of the extant manuscript tradition still await publication. Ultimately, such materials will incontrovertibly enhance and facilitate

academic attempts to come to terms with the history and development of *tafsīr* and allow a greater appreciation of the variety and depth of learning accomplished within the discipline. For all these reasons the academic study of *tafsīr* remains quite a challenging but ultimately auspicious endeavour.³⁶⁸

Notes

- 1 Among the key reference works, handbooks, and collected volumes which cover *tafsīr* related topics are: The *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, Jane McAuliffe. (Ed.), Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, (A-D), (E-I), (J-O), (P-Sh), and (Si-Z), which has many entries and extended essays covering subjects germane to early, classical, and modern *tafsīr*, although there are no entries on individual exegetes; biographical entries alongside articles on concepts and figures do feature in its sister publication, the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Exegesis is covered in Band I of Fu'āt Sezgin's *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967–84, pp. 19–49. Companions and handbooks include: Jane Dammen McAuliffe. *Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. The book has a number of chapters which deal with interpretation. See also Nabia Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri II, Qur'ānic Commentary and Tradition*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1967. Note that this work and indeed her study on the North Arabian Script can be downloaded from: <https://oi.uchicago.edu/research/pubs/catalog/islamic.html> (accessed 20th June 2012). Montgomery Watt. *Introduction to the Qur'ān*, R. Bell's introduction Revised by Watt, W.M., *Islamic Surveys*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997. A chapter is devoted to 'Muslim Scholarship and the Qur'ān' in which Watt briefly deals with exegesis and interpretation (pp. 167–72). A selection of his articles, many of which deal with exegetical topics, can be found in Montgomery Watt. *Early Islam, Collected Articles*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991. The connection between grammar and exegesis is examined in Kees Versteegh. *Arabic Grammar and Qur'ānic Exegesis in Early Islam*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993. The canonizing function of *tafsīr* is one of the principal theses examined in John Wansbrough. *Qur'ānic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977. Wansbrough examines many of the early *tafsīr* texts, reviewing the relationship between the texts and the emergence of the Qur'ān as a fixed text. See also Andrew Rippin's expanded edition: *John Wansbrough, Qur'ānic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation, Foreword, Translations and Expanded Notes* by Andrew Rippin. Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2004. Cf. John Wansbrough. *The Sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978). For a discussion of the implications of his arguments see Andrew Rippin's 'Literary Analysis of Qur'ān, *tafsīr*, and *sīra*: the Methodologies of John Wansbrough.' *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*. Edited by R. C. Martin. Tucson 1985, pp. 151–163. The standard work for the study of the Qur'ān was Theodor Nöldeke and Friedrich Schwally's *Geschichte des Qorans*. Second edition. Leipzig: Dieterich 'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung. 1909–38, which was based on Nöldeke's prizewinning essay originally submitted to a competition held in Paris by the Academie des inscriptions et belles lettres in 1860. It was supplemented in Gotthelf Bergsträsser and Otto Pretzl. *Geschichte des Qorāns von Theodor Nöldeke: III Die Geschichte des Korantexts*. Leipzig: Dieterich 'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung. 1909–38. And a collection of significant articles features in *Approaches to the Qur'ān*.

Edited by G. R. Hawting and Abdul-Kader A. Shareef, Routledge: New York and London, 1993. Also <http://www.eupublishing.com/journal/jqs>, which hosts the *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies*.

- 2 Articles on the Qur'ān and *tafsīr* feature in the two Variorum volumes edited by Andrew Rippin: *The Qur'ān: Style and Contents*. Aldershot: Variorum, 1999 and *The Qur'ān: Formative Interpretation*. Aldershot: Variorum, 1999; the latter work includes seventeen published articles. Rippin's published articles feature in *The Qur'ān and its Interpretive Tradition*. Aldershot: Ashgate, Variorum, 2000. See also Andrew Rippin (ed.) *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005; introductory and advanced exegetical themes are covered and the text includes a number of chapters devoted to key scholars and themes within exegesis. *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. Edited by Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Barry D. Walfish, and Joseph W. Goering. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. This work concentrates on exegesis within specific historical confines and from a comparative perspective; the Islamic materials consist of ten articles, although none of these deals with hermeneutics but issues of dating, genres, and arguments about the original context of the Qur'an. Andrew Rippin edited *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988. The work features a fine range of studies on *tafsīr*. See also John Burton's chapter on *tafsīr*. In *Religion, Learning, and Science in the 'Abbasid Period*. Edited by M. J. L. Young, J. D. Latham, and R. B. Serjeant. Cambridge, UK, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990. Pp. 40–55. For a detailed bibliographical overview of academic work on *Tafsīr* and representative sources see <http://oxfordbibliographiesonline.com> (Andrew Rippin 'Tafsīr'). Also see Erik S. Ohlander. 'Qur'ānic Studies.' In *Handbook of Medieval Studies: Terms–Methods–Trends*. Edited by Albrecht Classen. Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2010, vol. 1, pp. 81–93. Also see the surveys in Andrew Rippin. *The Islamic World*. London, New York: Routledge, 2008. Nicolai Sinai. *Fortschreibung und Auslegung: Studien zur frühen Koraninterpretation*. Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 2009. Barbara Freyer Stowasser. *Women in the Qur'ān, Traditions, and Interpretation*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. Helmut Gätje. *The Qur'ān and its Exegesis: Selected Texts with Classical and Modern Interpretations*. Translated by Alford T. Welch. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976. Hamza, Feras and Sajjad Rizvi with Farhana Mayer. *The Anthology of Qur'ānic Commentaries: On the Nature of the Divine*. Edited by Feras Hamza and Sajjad Rizvi with Farhana Mayer. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. For biographies see Ibn Khallikān, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān*. 8 vols. Edited by Iḥsān 'Abbās Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1968. The text features literary surveys of the key commentators and a translation of the text exists: Ibn Khallikan. *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*. 4 vols. Translated by William MacGuckin de Slane. Paris: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1843. See also Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn. *Ta'rīkh al-Islām wa-wafāyāta al-mashāhīr wa'l-a'lām*. 25 Vols. Edited by 'Umar A. Tadmurī. Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabī, 1987–99. Brief biographies of exegetes feature in Julie Scott Meisami and Paul Starkey. (eds). *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*. 2 vols. London and New York: Routledge, 1998. Biographies of some of the early grammarians are provided in the translation of the *Fihrist* by Bayard Dodge. *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm: a Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, edited and translated by Bayard Dodge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1970. Al-Dāwūdī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī. *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*. Group of editors. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, n.d. And 'Umar Riḍā

Kaḥḥāla. *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin: tarājim muṣannifī al-kutub al-'Arabiyya*, 15 vols. Damascus: al-Maktaba al-'Arabiyya fī Dimashq, 1957–1961. Many renowned exegetes are discussed in Joseph van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991–5. For modern Arabic treatments of exegetes see Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Dhahabī. *Al-Tafsīr wa'l-mufasssirin: baḥṭh tafsīlī 'an nash'at al-tafsīr wa-taṭawwurihi wa-alwānihi wa-madhāhibihi*. 3 vols. Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, 1961–62. And Ibn 'Ashūr's *al-Tafsīr wa-rijāluhi*. Tunis: Dār al-Kutub al-Sharqiyya, 1966. See also *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Vol. IV: The Age of Achievement: A.D. 750 to the End of the Fifteenth Century. Edited by C. E. Bosworth and the late M. S. Asimov. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 1992–2005. pp. 91–131, which has a section on *tafsīr* written by C. Gilliot, from p. 97 f.

- 3 For surveys of classical exegesis and the works of individual exegetes see the following: Walid Saleh. *The Formation of the Classical Tafsīr Tradition: the Qur'ān Commentary of al-Tha'lābī*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2004. See the review by Omar Alī-De-Unzaga in *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2006:8.1), pp. 119–125. Further surveys include Kristin Zahra Sands. *Šūfī Commentaries on the Qur'ān in Classical Islam*. London and New York, Routledge 2006; Hussein Abdul-Raof. *Schools of Qur'ānic Exegesis. Genesis and Development*. London, Routledge, 2010; Ignaz Goldziher's influential text on the history of *tafsīr*, *Die Richtungen der islamischen Koranlegung*, has been edited and translated by Wolfgang H. Behn. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2006; Ignaz Goldziher. *Schools of Koranic Commentators*. With an introduction on Goldziher and hadith from Fuat Sezgin's *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums*. The Arabic work was translated by 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Najjār. *Madhāhib al-Tafsīr al-Islāmī*. Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānījī, 1955. Gerhard Böwering. *The Mystical Vision of Existence in Classical Islam. The Qur'ānic Hermeneutics of the Sufi Sahl al-Tustarī. d. 283/896*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1980. Bruce Fudge. *Qur'ānic Hermeneutics: Al-Ṭabrisī and the Craft of Commentary*. London New York: Routledge. 2011. Also see Abdul Musa. 'The Historical Development of *tafsīr*'. *Islamic Culture* (1976:50), pp. 141–153. Ilse Lichtenstadter. 'Qur'ān and Qur'ān Exegesis.' *Humaniora Islamica II* (1974), pp. 3–28. For specific themes within exegesis see Cornelia Schöck. *Koranexegese, Grammatik und Logik. Zum Verhältnis von arabischer und aristotelischer Urteils-, Konsequenz- und Schlusslehre*. Leiden, Boston: E.J. Brill, 2005. Morris Seale. *Qur'ān and Bible: Studies in Interpretation and Dialogue*. London: Croom Helm, 1978. Ahmad Rashid. 'Qur'ānic Exegesis and Classical *tafsīr*.' *Islamic Quarterly* (1968:12), pp. 71–119. Nadia Maria El Cheikh. 'Sūrat Al-Rūm: A Study of the Exegetical Literature.' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (1998:118.3), pp. 356–364.
- 4 For general studies on the Qur'ān see Angelika Neuwirth. *The Qur'ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu*. Edited by Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx. Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 2010. Michael Cook. *The Koran, A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. M. A. Draz. *Introduction to the Qur'ān*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2000. Neal Robinson. *Discovering the Qur'ān: a Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text*, London: SCM, 1996. Toshihiko Izutsu. *God and Man in the Qur'ān: Semantics of the Qur'ānic Weltanschauung*. Tokyo: Keio Institute of Cultural and Linguistic Studies, 1964. *Idem*. *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān*. Montreal: McGill University Press, 1966. Rudi Paret. *Mohammad und der Koran: Geschichte und Verkündigung des arabischen Propheten*. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1980. Bruce Lawrence. *The Qur'ān: A Biography*. London: Atlantic Books, 2006. Abdel Haleem. 'Context and Internal Relationships. Keys to Qur'ānic

- Exegesis. A Study of Sūrat al-Raḥmān.' In *Approaches to the Qur'ān*. G. Hawting, Sharif, A. *Idem*. 'Grammatical Shift for Rhetorical Purposes: *iltifāt* and Related Features in the Qur'ān.' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1992:55.3), pp. 407–32. *Idem*. *Understanding the Qur'ān: Themes and Style*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1999. *Idem*. 'The Qur'ānic Employment of the Story of Noah.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2006:8.1), pp. 38–57. Matt Zahniser. 'Sūra as Guidance and Exhortation: The Composition of Sūra al-Nisā.' Asma Afsaruddin and Matt Zahniser. *Humanism Culture and Language in the Near East: Studies in Honour of George Krotkoff*. Winona Lake, Indiana, Eisenbrauns, 1997. Pp. 71–85. Hussein Abdul-Raof. *Consonance in the Qur'ān: a Conceptual, Intertextual and Linguistic Analysis*. München: Lincom, 2005. Also see his 'The Linguistic Architecture of the Qur'ān.' In *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2000:2.2), pp. 36–51. Salwa Muhammad Awwa. *Textual Relations in the Qur'ān: Relevance, Coherence and Structure*. London: Routledge, 2006. Asma Afsaruddin. 'In Praise of the Word of God: Reflections of Early Religious and Social Concerns in the *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān* Genre'. *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2002:4.1), pp. 27–48. *Idem*. 'The Excellences of the Qur'ān: Textual Sacrality and the Organization of Early Islamic Society.' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (2002:122.1), pp. 1–24. Zafar Ishaq Ansari. 'Scientific Exegesis of the Qur'ān.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2001:3.1), pp. 91–104. Bustami Khir. 'The Qur'ān and Science: the Debate on the Validity of Scientific Interpretations.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2000:2) pp. 19–35. Richard Bell. *A Commentary on the Qur'ān*. Edited by Clifford Edmund Bosworth and M. E. J. Richardson. 2 vols. *Journal of Semitic Studies* Monograph 14. Manchester: University of Manchester, 1991. Ahmad Dallal. Tolerance or Compatibility? The Search for a Qur'ānic Paradigm of Science. *Les sciences dans les sociétés islamiques. Approches historiques et perspectives d'avenir*. Rabat: Actes du colloque, 2004. Sous la dir. de Mohammed Abattouy: Fondation du Roi Abdul-Aziz, Casablanca. pp. 121–140, 2007. Alexander Knysch, 'Multiple Areas of Influence.' In *Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 211–233.
- 5 For a review of current issues in approaches to the Qur'ān see Suha Taji-Farouki. *Modern Muslim Intellectuals and the Qur'ān*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2004. It is worth comparing the gist of the arguments with the material in Daniel Brown. *Rethinking Tradition In Modern Islamic Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Kenneth Cragg, *The Pen and the Faith: Eight Modern Muslim Writers and the Qur'ān*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1985. *Idem*. '*Tafsīr* and *istiftsār* in the Qur'ān.' *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* (1997:8.3), pp. 309–321. *Idem*. 'The Historical Geography of the Qur'ān: a Study in *Asbāb al-nuzūl*.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (1999:1.1), pp. 81–92. Ahmad Dallal. 'The Origins and Objectives of Islamic Revivalist Thought, 1750–1850.' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (1993:113), pp. 341–59. J. J. G. Jansen. *The Interpretation of the Qur'ān in Modern Egypt*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974. Andreas Görke. 'Die Spaltung des Mondes in der modernen Koranexegese und im Internet.' *Die Welt des Islams* (2010:50.1), pp. 60–116.
- 6 The classical literature listed a number of explicit modes for the transmission of knowledge: the first of which is *samā'*, this related to active audition and was considered the most esteemed form of transmission. It entailed a student listening to his mentor who would be reciting or reading from memory or a book; dictation was also involved 2.) *Qirā'a*: this involved reading before a mentor from memory or a book. It is sometimes referred to as *Arḍ* and was likewise applied to instances if a student was present when someone else was engaged in *qirā'a* with a mentor. The teacher would listen and be in a position to correct

students should the need arise. 3.) *Ijāza*: permission or license. In some classical works nine further sub-divisions of it feature in the literature. It basically involves a mentor granting permission to a specific student to disseminate a given text, a part thereof, or even a single narration. 4.) *Munāwala*: this would involve a mentor handing over a received text or document to a student or students who would then be told that they could disseminate texts or documents; this process is sometimes equated with the process of *ijāza*. 5.) *Mukātaba* or *al-Kitāba*: a scholar would himself write down some materials for an absent student, or indeed have them dictated for that individual. It would also cover instances in which a scholar would actually write the materials down himself and hand them to that very student. 6.) *I'lām*: a mentor would be 'informing' a student that a text or narration was from a certain source, although he would not necessarily grant permission for it to be disseminated. 7.) *Waṣiyya*: this was in the form of a will in which an individual would possibly designate someone to pass on traditions; such instances would extend to instructions left when an individual was embarking on a journey. 8.) *Wijāda*: finding traditions in works and transmitting and passing them on (the process of *wijāda* also contributes to the manner by which editions of classical books on traditions are now received through printed editions of earlier texts, which themselves have been validated through the framework of permissions). For definitions of all these designated forms of dissemination and acquisition see: Ibn Khallād al-Rāmhurmuzī's *al-Muḥaddith al-fāsil bayn al-rāwī wa'l-wā'ī*, edited by M. al-'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb, 3rd edn. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1404/1984; pp. 420–480; Al-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ ibn Yaḥṣubī's *Ilmā' ilā ma'rifat uṣūl al-rivāya wa-taqyid al-samā'*. Edited by Aḥmad Ṣaqr. Dār al-Turāth, al-Maktabat al-'Atīqa: Beirut, Tunis, 1970. Pp. 62–121. Zayn al-Dīn al-'Irāqī, *Fath al-mughīth sharḥ alfiyyat al-ḥadīth*. Edited by Ṣalāḥ 'Uwīḍah. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1993, pp. 187–229. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī. *Tadrīb al-rāwī fī sharḥ taqrīb al-Nawawī*. 2 parts in 1 vol. Edited by 'Abd al-Wahhāb 'Abd al-Laṭīf. Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, 1972, vol. 2, pp. 8–61. Zayn al-Dīn al-'Irāqī. *Al-Taḥyid wa'l-īdāh*, pp. 159–89. Other related materials features in Mustafa Azami. *Studies in Ḥadīth Methodology and Literature*. American Trust Publication: 1977. Gautier Juynboll, '(Re)appraisal of Some Technical Terms in Ḥadīth Science'. *Islamic Law and Society* (2001:8.3), pp. 303–349. Christopher Melchert, 'The Etiquette of Learning in the Early Islamic Study Circle', in J. Lowry, Stewart, and Toorawa (eds.), *Law and Education in Medieval Islam, Studies in Memory of Professor George Makdisi* (2004), pp. 33–44, pp. 36–40. William A. Graham. 'Traditionalism in Islam: An Essay in Interpretation.' *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 1993:23.3, pp. 495–522. Harald Motzki (ed.), *Ḥadīth: Origins and Development*. Aldershot: Variorum, 2004. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī's *Muqaddimat* or *Kitāb Ma'rifat anwā' 'ilm al-ḥadīth*. It has been translated by Eerik Dickinson: *An Introduction to the Science of the Ḥadīth (Kitāb Ma'rifat anwā' 'ilm al-ḥadīth)* Reading: Garnet Publishing Limited, 2006. The above definitions are summaries of the discussions in *The Ḥadīth*. Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies Series. Edited by Mustafa Shah. 4 Volumes. London; New York: Routledge, 2010, vol. 1, pp. 38–9, for more on the concept of *taḥammul* (modes for the dissemination of knowledge) and the ranks of narrators.

- 7 Concerns have been raised about the academic quality of some of the available critical editions. Notwithstanding the active production of critical editions of exegetical manuscripts, there are numerous theses and dissertations on exegetical subjects and commentators which are available on the internet. For CDs which have elaborate search engines See (www.turath.com) Also <http://www.altafsir.com/> hosts a very large collection of online classical commentaries. While for

manuscripts in the British Library see <http://www.brill.nl/arabic-manuscripts-british-library-holy-quran-quranic-sciences>. Arberry, Arthur. *A Handlist of the Arabic Manuscripts of the Chester Beatty Library*. Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co. Ltd. 1963 (vol. VI). See for example manuscript catalogues such as Otto Loth. *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of India Office*. London 1877 (Printed in Hereford by Order of the Secretary of State for India in Council). The materials on *tafsīr* are included on pp. 7–26. BL 279, which is Baydāwī's famous *Anwār al-tafsīr* and BL 94, which is al-Naysābūrī's text, *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān*. Vassie R. (ed.). *A Classified Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts Acquired Since 1912*. Vol. ii: Qur'anic sciences and hadith. The British Library: Oriental and India Office Collections London: 1995. Ross Denison and Edward Browne *Two Collections of Persian and Arabic Manuscripts Preserved in the India Office Library*. London, 1902. These consist of the William Jones and Ashburner collection of manuscripts. See also the Mingana Collection Birmingham University www.bu.ac.uk. Manuscripts can be downloaded from <http://makhtota.ksu.edu.sa/browse/0>; Adam Gacek. *Catalogue of The Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies University of London*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies University of London, 1981. See the <http://guides.lib.umich.edu/content.php?pid=18162&sid=179938> (accessed 10th October 2012), which provides a useful list of links to various collections, catalogues, and digital resources.

- 8 For a traditional survey see Ibn Khaldūn. *Muqaddima Ibn Khaldūn: Diwān al-mubtada' wa'l-khabar fī ta'rīkh al-'Arab wa'l-barbar wa-man 'āsarahum min dhawī 'l-sha'n al-akbār*. 7 vols. Edited by Khalīl Shāhāda and Suhayl Zakkār. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2000. Vol. 1, pp. 553–5. And indeed Dhahabī's *Tafsīr wa'l-mufasssīrīn*.
- 9 Such statements can be found in all the introductory sections of the major *tafsīr* works and indeed the preambles to classical hermeneutics by al-Zarkashī and al-Suyūfī. See also Abū Shāma al-Maqdisī, Shihāb al-Dīn. *Al-Murshid al-wajīz ilā 'ulūm tata'allaq bi'l-Kitāb al-'azīz*. Edited by T. Qūllāj. Beirut: Dār al-Sader, 1975. Texts devoted to summarising the virtues of recitation include: Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Ghāfiqī. *Kitāb lamaḥāt al-anwār wa-nafaḥāt al-azhār wa-riyy al-ẓam'ān li-ma'rifat ma warada min al-āthār fī thawāb qārī' al-Qur'ān*. 2 vols. Edited by Rif'at Fawzī 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. Beirut: Dār al-Bash'ir al-Islāmiyya, 1997. See the introduction and vol. 1, pp. 91–112.
- 10 Ibn Sallām, Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim. *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān: Ma'ālimuhu wa-ādābuhu*. 2 vols. Edited by Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid. Rabāt: Wizārat al-Awqāf Wa'l-Shū'n al-Maghribiyya, 1995 (1425 A.H.), vol. 1, p. 236.
- 11 Ibn 'Aṭīyya al-Andalusī, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ghālib. *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-'azīz*. 5 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad. Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1993, vol. 1, pp. 40–41. The first statement is attributed to Mujāhid, while the second to Abū 'Āliyya al-Riyāḥī. Al-Muḥāsibī's *Fahm al-Qur'ān* invokes the same statement and al-Zarkashī refers to it in an extensive chapter on knowledge of *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* in the *Burhān*. Such traditions were evidently flagged up in Shī'ite commentaries. al-Ḥārith ibn Asad al-Muḥāsibī, *Fahm al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Ḥusayn al-Quwwatālī. Cairo: Dār al-Fikr, 1971, p. 328. It was to be revered as the par excellence adage validating esoteric *tafsīr*.
- 12 The division of *tafsīr* into two broad categories: *tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr* and *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* is misleading in that exegesis which was exclusively anchored to a traditionally defined corpus of data (*tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr*) is difficult to substantiate. In modern treatments such as Muḥammad al-Dhahabī, Ṣubḥī Ṣāliḥ, and others the division is used as the basis for the classification of types of *tafsīr*; the division is arbitrary as the contents of the classified texts often defy such compartmentalisation. This has been clearly shown by Walid A. Saleh, 'Preliminary Remarks

- on the Historiography of *tafsīr* in Arabic: A History of the Book Approach'. *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2010:12), pp. 6–40. Walid Saleh, 'Marginalia and Peripheries: A Tunisian Historian and the History of Qur'ānic Exegesis'. *Numen* 2011:58 (Brill), pp. 284–313. See also Basheer M. Nafi. 'Tāhīr ibn 'Āshūr: The Career and Thought of a Modern Reformist 'Ālim. *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies*. (2005:7.1), pp. 1–32: see pp. 19–20 for a modern discussion of the issue of the resort to *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*.
- 13 See Ibn Taymiyya, Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm. *Majmū' fatāwā shaykh al-Islam*. Edited by 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim. 38 vols. Riyād: Maṭba'at al-Riyāḍ, 1961–74, vol. 13, pp. 329–354 and pp. 381–384. This section of the *Majmū'* deals with the traditional basis of exegesis and its principles. See the translation in Chapter 35 of this Collection. Also of relevance is Walid Saleh's 'Ibn Taymiyya and the Rise of Radical Hermeneutics: An Analysis of "An Introduction to the Foundation of Qur'ānic Exegesis."' In *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*. Edited by Shahab Ahmed and Yossef Rapoport. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 123–62. Cf. Shahab Ahmed. 'Ibn Taymiyyah and the Satanic Verses.' *Studia Islamica* (1998:87.2), pp. 67–124. Ibn Taymiyya, Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm. *Daqā'iq al-tafsīr*. 4 vols. Edited by Muḥammad al-Sayyid, Damascus: Mu'assasat 'Ulūm al-Qurān, 1984, which collates his views on *tafsīr*. See also Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī. *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*. 4 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1987, vol. 1, 288–93. Ibn al-'Arabī al-Ma'āfirī, al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh. *Qānūn al-ta'wīl*. Edited by Muḥammad al-Sulaymānī, Jeddah: Dār al-Qibla li'l-Thaqāfa, 1986.
 - 14 al-Qāsimī, Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn. *Maḥāsīn al-ta'wīl*. 17 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī. Cairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabī ('Īsā al-Babī al-Ḥalabī), 1957–70. The first volume of which includes a prolegomenon on the sources of exegesis.
 - 15 For a sample of the huge range of Prophetic traditions in which Ibn 'Abbās features, many of which are exegetical and legal, see *Musnad* of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. 9 vols. Edited by Shu'ayb Arna'ūt and 'Adil Murshid. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla. Especially vols. 3 and 4.
 - 16 Muḥammad Ibn Sa'd's *Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*. 7 Vols. Beirut: Dār Beirut; Dār Sādir, 1957, vol. 5, pp. 287–93; also see Muhammad Siddiqi. *Hadith Literature: its Origin, Development, Special Features and Criticism*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1993, pp. 96–100 and 134–5. For more on the work of Ibn Sa'd see Chase Robinson. *Islamic Historiography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, *passim* Chapter Four; and 'Abd al-'Azīz, Dūrī. *The Rise of Historical Writing Among the Arabs*. Edited and translated by L. Conrad. New Jersey: Princeton, 1983.
 - 17 For more on this figure see Yeshayahu Goldfeld. 'The *Tafsīr* of 'Abdallah b. 'Abbās.' *Der Islam* (1981:58), pp. 125–35. Claude Gilliot. 'Portrait 'mythique' d' Ibn 'Abbās.' *Arabica* (1985:32), pp. 127–184. See Chapter 12 of the Collection. One would also need to bear in mind the notion that there were specific types of statements attributed to Companion figures which had the status of being *marfū'* (quasi Prophetic) in the sense that they yielded certified authority. A qualification of the issues surrounding the text is offered in Chapter 13. A list of the works ascribed to Ibn 'Abbās is detailed in Fuad Sezgin. *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums. Band I (Qur'ānwissenschaften, ḥadīth)* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967, pp. 27–28. See also Herbert Berg's contribution (Chapter 14 in the Collection). It should be remembered that similar hierarchical frameworks were listed to explain the transmission of Qur'ānic readings: see the introduction to al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn. *Ma'rifat al-qurrā' al-kibār*. 2 vols. Edited by M. Jād al-Ḥaqq, 1st edn. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, 1968.

- 18 The sources very deliberately present the view that even stern opponents of forms of *tafsīr* seemingly recognised his brilliance as an exegete: in one report the Companion Ibn ‘Umar famed for his strict religiosity was asked about the meaning of the Qur’ānic verse (Q. 21:30). He advised his questioner that he should solicit Ibn ‘Abbās’s interpretation of these verses and return to him with his explanation. Upon relating to him the gist of his exposition, Ibn ‘Umar is reported to have exclaimed that ‘I used to be displeased by Ibn ‘Abbās’ audaciousness when explaining the Qur’ān, but I now appreciate that he has indeed been bestowed with knowledge.’ See *Itqān*: vol. 2, p. 373.
- 19 Comparable testimonies praising his knowledge resonate in the literature of the *ḥadīth*: in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. 9 vols. Edited by Shu‘ayb Arna‘ūt and ‘Adil Murshid. Beirut: Mu‘assasat al-Risāla, vol. 4, p. 244 (*ḥadīth* no. 2422) in which the wording differs (*Allāhumma aṭī Ibn ‘Abbās al-ḥikma wa ‘allimhu al-ta’wīl*); al-Bukhārī’s collection of traditions includes a report which states that the Prophet is said to have embraced Ibn ‘Abbās, requesting that he be blessed with ‘knowledge of the book’ and in a second citation ‘be blessed with knowledge of faith and *ta’wīl*’, in later periods the term *ta’wīl* was to take on theological importance, although earlier it was used synonymously to denote *tafsīr*. And Ibn Ḥanbal’s *Musnad* has a similar report. Also see Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, p. 9 (tradition no. 17) and p. 306 (traditions no. 3756). This statement features in Muqātil’s Commentary on *Sūrat al-Naṣr* ومسح رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بيده على رأس ابن عباس وقال اللهم فقهه في الدين وعلمه التأويل. For details on the background of these materials see G. H. A. Juynboll. *Encyclopaedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2007, p. 1. Juynboll does argue that the reference to his being the premier exegesis expert ‘cannot be gleaned with certainty from *faḍā’il* reports that originated at any time earlier than the second half of the second/eighth century.’, p. 1. Cf. Ibn Ḥajar. *Fath al-Bārī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 15 vols. Riyāḍ, Damascus: Dār al-Salām, Dār al-Fayḥā’, 2000, vol. 1, pp. 223–224, and vol. v, p. 127 in which Ibn Ḥajar explains the origins of the epithets used to qualify the distinguished status of Ibn ‘Abbās as an exegete. Ibn Ḥajar describes him as being the most knowledgeable exegete among the Companions. In *Al-Kutub al-Sitta: Mawsū‘at al-ḥadīth al-sharīf*. Edited by Ṣāliḥ ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Āl-Shaykh. Riyāḍ: Dār al-Salām, 1999, which comprises the six canonical collections of traditions.
- 20 This is quoted in ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī’s *tafsīr* see below; cf. al-Muḥāsibī, *Fahm al-Qur’ān*, p. 329 and al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, vol. 1, p. 75. It also features in Ibn Taymiyya’s *Majmū‘*, vol. 13, p. 384. A similar statement is quoted in the introduction to Muqātil’s *Tafsīr*. Traditionist scholars do point out that the *isnād* is technically defined as *munqatī‘*; namely there is a gap between the individual narrating the tradition and its author (Ibn ‘Abbās).
- 21 See Ibn Ḥajar’s *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*. 12 vols. Hyderabad: Dā‘irat al-Ma‘ārif al-Nizāmiyya, A.H. 1326. ‘Ikrima: vol. 7, pp. 263–273. He is described as possessing the ability to explain every verse of the Qur’ān, although a subject of dispute is the fact that he is also accused of spuriously ascribing opinions on *tafsīr* to his mentor Ibn ‘Abbās and of harbouring sectarian views; Muḥammad Ibn Sa‘d’s *Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*. 7 Vols. Beirut: Dār Sādir, 1957, vol. 5, pp. 287–293. Cf. Ibn Sa‘d’s vol. 2, pp. 365–7 in which Ṭāwūs describes his preference for studying with him. And Ṭāwūs: *Tahdhīb*, vol. 5, pp. 100–02. The *tafsīr* of Mujaḥid is viewed as being a later collection of statements attributed to him: Mujaḥid ibn Jabr al-Makkī. *Tafsīr Mujaḥid*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Salām. Madīnat al-Naṣr: Dār al-Fikr al-Islāmī, 1989. For classical biographical entries on the earliest exegetes see al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn

- Ismā'īl. *Al-Ta'rīkh al-Kabīr*. 4 vols. Hyderabad, Majlis Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, 1963–78. And later figures can be reviewed in the biographical dictionary of Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī. *Lisān al-Mīzān*. Edited by 'Abd al-Fattāh Abū Ghudda. 10 vols. Beirut: Maktab al-Maṭbū'āt al-Islāmiyya, 2002. The work comprises materials gleaned from earlier sources. See Franz Rosenthal, 'On Medieval Authorial Bibliographies: Al-Ya'qūbī and Ibn Hajar'. In *Literary Heritage of Classical Islam: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of James A. Bellamy*. Edited by Mustansir Mir in collaboration with J. E. Fossum. Princeton: Darwin Press, 1993, pp. 255–274.
- 22 See al-Baghawī, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas'ūd. *Ma'ālim al-tanzīl*. 8 vols. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh al-Nimr, 'Uthmān Jum'a, Sulaymān Muṣliḥ. Riyād: Dār al-Ṭayba 1409 A.H., vol. 1, pp. 34–37. In a section of the *Itqān* which deals with the classes of exegetes (*Ṭabāqāt al-mufasssīrīn*) al-Suyūṭī identifies ten figures among the Companions who are renowned for their exegetical knowledge and they include: the four caliphs, Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbās, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Zayd ibn Thābit, Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, and 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr. However, he then points out that among the caliphs, 'Alī's exegetical legacy was more prolific, while the others were rarely cited, a fact he attributes to their having died so early in the course of Islam's development, vol. 1, pp. 372–82.
- 23 Often their exegetical statements are collated from other works, many of which were compiled much later; for example see Al-Daḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim. *Tafsīr al-Daḥḥāk*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Shukrī Aḥmad al-Zāwītī. Cairo: Dār al-Salām, 1999. See the more recent Kees Versteegh. 'The Name of the Ant and the Call to Holy War: 'Al-Daḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim's commentary on the Qur'ān.' In *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam. Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki*. Edited by Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, Kees Versteegh and Joas Wagemakers. Leiden: Brill, 2011, pp. 279–299. (Chapter 43 in the Collection).
- 24 Questions surrounding the reliability of individuals such as Muqātil and Muḥammad Ibn al-Kalbī continued to surface in the sources: see 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Adī al-Jurjānī (al-Qaṭṭān) *Al-Kāmil fī ḍu'afā' al-rijāl*. 7 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1997, vol. 6, pp. 2127–2132. Ibn 'Adī points out that individuals such as Sufyān ibn 'Uyayna, Sufyān al-Thawrī, Shu'ba, Ḥammād ibn Salama, Ismā'īl ibn 'Ayyāsh, Hushāym (Ibn Ḥanbal's mentor), would accept his material on exegesis but reject his *ḥadīth* narrations, p. 2132. (*loc. cit.*) al-Kalbī's son, Hishām (d. 204/819 or 206/821), was a prolific author who is credited with numerous writings, including exegetical works. For details of these see: Muḥammad Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*. Edited by R. Tajaddud, 3rd edn. Beirut: Dār al-Masīra, 1988, pp. 108–111. It should also be noted that Muqātil is often confused with his namesake Muqātil ibn Hayyān, whom *ḥadīth* critics recognise as being reliable: see Patricia Crone. 'A Note on Muqātil b. Ḥayyān and Muqātil b. Sulaymān.' *Der Islam* (1997:74.2), pp. 238–249.
- 25 Features of the transmission of Muqātil's text are discussed at length by Versteegh, who makes the important distinction that individuals who were collating the works of earlier authors always indicated separate quotations, distinguishing them from the main text. So despite the stuttered nature of the narrative, the integrity of the original work is considered intact. See Kees Versteegh. *Arabic Grammar and Qur'ānic Exegesis in Early Islam*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993, p. 93. Cf. Sezgin who refers to nine manuscripts of the work (Sezgin, 1967, p. 37.) and Claude Gilliot. 'Muqātil, grand exégète, traditioniste et théologien maudit'. *Journal Asiatique* (1991:279), pp. 39–92, pp. 40–51.
- 26 Muqātil ibn Sulaymān al-Balkhī. *al-Ashbāḥ wa'l-naẓā'ir fī l-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. Edited by 'Abd Allāh Maḥmūd Shaḥāta. Cairo: al-Hay'at al-Miṣriyya al-'Āmma

- li'l-Kitāb, 1975. The fact that Shaḥāta used the term *ashbāh* is criticized by some. Muqātil ibn Sulaymān al-Balkhī. *Tafsīr Muqātil*. 4 vols. Edited by 'Abd Allāh Maḥmūd Shihāta. Cairo: al-Hay'at al-Miṣriyya al-'Āmma li'l-Kitāb, 1979–89. Muqātil ibn Sulaymān al-Balkhī. *Tafsīr al-khams mi'at āya min al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Isaiah Goldfeld. Shafā 'Amr, Dār al-Mashriq, 1980. See Nora S. Eggen. 'Conceptions of Trust in the Qur'ān.' *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* (2011:8), pp. 56–85: especially pp. 62–64. The text purportedly constituted a refutation of the *qadariyya*, the precursors of the theological movement of the Mu'tazila. For references to the *qadariyya* see Joseph van Ess. 'Early Development of Kalām.' In *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society*. Edited by G. H. A. Juynboll. Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1982. And Joseph Van Ess, 'Political Ideas in Early Islamic Religious Thought' *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (2001:28), pp. 151–64. For more on the Mu'tazila see Josef van Ess, 'Mu'tazila'. In *Encyclopedia of Religion*. Edited by Mircea Eliade. New York: Macmillan Press, 1987, pp. 6317–25. Richard Frank. *Early Islamic Theology: The Mu'tazilites and al-Ash'arī: Texts and Studies on the Development and History of kalām*. Edited by Dimitri Gutas. Aldershot: Ashgate, Variorum, 2005. (Vol. II). Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī. 1990. *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*. Edited by M. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. Beirut: al-Maktaba al-Aṣriyya, 1990. Ibn al-Murtaḍā, Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā. *Ṭabaqāt al-mu'tazila*. Edited by Susanna Diwald-Wilzer. Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner, 1961.
- 27 For a translation of a small section of the text see Norman Calder, Jawid Mojaddedi, and Andrew Rippin (edited and translated by) *Classical Islam: A Sourcebook of Religious Literature*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003, pp. 105–7.
- 28 Ibn 'Adī al-Jurjānī (al-Qaṭṭān) *Al-Kāmil fī du'afā'*. Vol. 6, pp. 2427–2431. Cf. the discussion in Mehmet Akif Koç's 'A Comparison of the References to Muqātil b. Sulaymān (150/767) in the Exegesis of al-Tha'labī (427/1036) with Muqātil's own Exegesis.' *Journal of Semitic Studies* (2008:53.1), pp. 69–101. (Chapter 42 of the Collection), in which he suggests that he was rehabilitated in the later sources as an authority. Among the many works attributed to him is the *Mutashābih al-Qur'ān*, which identifies semantic parallels and resemblances with regards to lexical items in the Qur'ān: al-Kisā'ī has a work on the topic. See also Joseph van Ess, *Theologie und*, band II, pp. 527–8, where he explains how the Shāfi'ite scholar and heresiographer al-Malaṭī used the work. See also Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya *I'lām al-muwaqqi'īn 'an rabb al-'ālamīn*. 5 vols. Edited by Ṭaha 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Sa'd. Cairo: Maktabat al-Kuliyyāt al-Azhariyya, 1968, vol. 1, pp. 9, 1978. Gilliot makes the point that earlier scholars such as Muqātil were being retrospectively judged in the light of much more developed expressions of orthodoxy and faith. See his discussion in Chapter 1 of the Collection. For the controversy over Muqātil's theological views see Josef van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, band II, pp. 520–29, and the issue of whether his work was revised and reedited. Isaiah Goldfeld 'Muqātil ibn Sulaymān.' *Bar-Ilan Arabic and Islamic Studies* 2 (1978), pp. 13–30. M. M. al-Ṣawwāf, 'Muqātil ibn Sulaymān: An Early Zaydī Theologian, with Special Reference to his *Tafsīr al-khams mi'at āya*.' Unpublished D.Phil. dissertation, Oxford University. 1969; also see his article on 'Early *tafsīr*: A Survey of Qur'ānic Commentary up to 150 A.H.' In *Islamic Perspectives in Honour of Mawlana Abul 'Ala Mawdudī*. Leicester: The Islamic Foundation; Jeddah: Saudi Publishing House, 1979, pp. 135–45. See Ibn Jurayj's entry in al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn. *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*. Edited by Shu'ayb Arna'ūt, Ma'mūn al-Ṣāghirjī. 25 vols, Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1990, vol. 6, pp. 325–336. He is said to have been the first individual to commit knowledge to writing in Mecca (p. 326) and mention is also made of his use of *ijāza* and *munāwala* as modes for transmitting knowledge (p. 331). Ibn Abī Ḥātim

- includes a report which describes him as one of the first compilers of *tafsīr*: Ibn Abī Hātim. *Al-Jarh wa'l-ta'dīl*. 15 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī, n.d. This is a reprinted edition of: Hyderabad: Maṭba'at Jam'iyya Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, 1941–1953, vol. 1, p. 184. Ibn Jurayj. *Tafsīr ibn Jurayj*. Collated by 'Alī Ḥasan 'Abd al-Ghanī. Cairo: Maktabat al-Turath al-Islāmī, 1992.
- 29 Ibn 'Adī al-Jurjānī, *al-Kāmil fī du'afā' al-rijāl*, vol. 6, p. 2431. The *tafsīr* was transmitted by al-Hudhayl ibn Ḥabīb Abū Šāliḥ al-Zaydānī.
- 30 See also al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. *Mizān al-i'tidāl fī naqd al-rijāl*. 4 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Bijāwī. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1992, vol. 4, pp. 173–5. Ibn al-Nadīm identifies Muqātil as a member of the Zaydites; he also says he was a traditionist scholar and a reader (*qārī*). *Al-Fihrist*: p. 227. See also *Encyclopaedia of Canonical Hadīth*, pp. 431–434. It is reported that a copy of Muqātil's *tafsīr* was found in the possession of the traditionist Ibn 'Uyayna, who when asked whether he transmitted materials on his authority he replied no, adding that he used the text for purposes of corroboration and as an aid. Ibn Ḥajar's *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, vol. 10, p. 279.
- 31 Even the existence of a text which is ascribed to him is the subject of a dispute. The manuscript of his '*tafsīr*' is in the Chester Beatty Collection (Ms. no. 4224) (see also the Ayasofia Ms. 118 and Hamidiye Ms. 40). Rippin makes the point in both his study of the dating of the *tafsīr* Ibn 'Abbās and his review of Versteegh's work, both included in this collection, that 'Versteegh continues Wansbrough's nomenclature of calling this work *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*' and that there are very few grounds on which to do so.' Later on he points out that the work is from a time well past al-Farrā'. (*Miszellen*), pp. 320–321. 'Studying Early *Tafsīr* Texts' (Chapter 10). More recently Motzki has argued that an original Kalbī text was in existence and may have served as the prototype and source of later quotations, although the text used by Versteegh was actually the work of al-Dīnawarī. And it is clear that although the work erroneously identified with al-Kalbī is of a late provenance, this would in no way impinge upon his legacy and activity as an exegete in the early periods. For the traditionists' criticism see al-Nasā'ī, *al-Du'afā' wa'l-matrūkīn*. Edited by Kamāl Yūsuf al-Ḥuṭ and Burān al-Ḍanāwī. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyya, 1985, p. 211. He is described as being *matrūk al-ḥadīth*, which is simply a technical term to indicate that an individual's traditions were discarded due to issues regarding his reliability as a transmitter, especially when his narrations contradicted accepted materials. Some traditionist scholars would argue that such an individual's narrations should not be used even for purposes of reflection.
- 32 The issue of his reliability will be discussed below. His full name is Muḥammad ibn al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī, Abū'l-Naḍr; Ibn al-Nadīm mentions his standing as a distinguished scholar of *tafsīr*, recording that he was brought to Basra by Sulāymān ibn 'Alī and there he dictated his *tafsīr* to groups gathered at the latter's home. Having reached a verse of the ninth chapter of the Qur'ān he appeared to contravene the conventional explanation of the verse and those writing down his version quickly objected. But al-Kalbī is reported to have refused to continue dictating unless it was written down as 'it was revealed.' The matter was brought to the attention of Sulāymān who instructed those present to write it down in accordance with al-Kalbī's version and discard everything else. Ibn al-Nadīm. *al-Fihrist*, pp. 107–8. Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn. *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, vol. 6, pp. 248–249. Al-Dhahabī describes him as being of Shī'ite inclination.
- 33 The work of al-Dāwūdī. *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*. vol. 2, p. 149. (entry no. 491).
- 34 Ibn Abī Hātim's. *Al-Jarh wa'l-ta'dīl*, vol. 7, p. 271. The point is made that al-Fīrūzabādī made regular use of the *isnād* in the *Tanwīr* work. It is even suggested

- in Ibn 'Adī that al-Kalbī was asked to separate the materials he narrated on Abū Ṣāliḥ's authority from his own personal dicta and it transpired that he had little to say about the matter. Ibn 'Adī al-Jurjānī, *Al-Kāmil fī ḥu'afā' al-rijāl*, vol. 6, p. 2127.
- 35 Sufyān al-Thawrī, ibn Sa'īd ibn Masrūq. *Tafsīr Sufyān al-Thawrī: Riwayat Abū Ja'far Muḥammad 'an Abī Hudhayfa al-Nahdī*. Edited by Imtiyāz 'Alī 'Arshī. Rampur: Silsalat Maṭbū'āt Maktabat Riḍā. 1965. The more recent Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya is a reproduced version of the Rampur edition. Wansbrough describes the *tafsīr* 'as consisting of somewhat disjointed observations.' (p. 137, *Q.S.*). Wansbrough did hint that it was difficult to explain lacunae in the manuscript, although he accepted that 'the work was no more than an extrapolation of Sufyān's utterances.' (p. 138). See the study of this *tafsīr* by Versteegh *Arabic Grammar and Qur'ānic Exegesis*: pp. 111–113.
- 36 *Tafsīr Sufyān al-Thawrī*: pp. 15, 71, 82. It is reported that Sufyān al-Thawrī left his books in the care of 'Ammār ibn Sayf, asking him to bury them in the event of his death. Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 6, p. 388.
- 37 Ibn 'Adī al-Jurjānī (al-Qaṭṭān) *Al-Kāmil fī ḥu'afā' al-rijāl*, vol. 6, p. 2427.
- 38 There are two manuscripts of this *tafsīr* the first of which is in Ankara and the second in Egypt. The Ankara version is incomplete and the edition of this work, which was published in Riyāḍh, begins from the opening chapter of the Qur'ān and has no preface: al-Ṣan'ānī, 'Abd al-Razzāq ibn Hammām. *Tafsīr 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī*. 3 vols. Edited by Muṣṭafā Muslim Muḥammad. Riyāḍh: Dār al-Rushd, 1999. Indeed, the editor points out that he relied on sources such as al-Ṭabarī and al-Suyūṭī to reconstruct the early part of the text. The Egyptian manuscript does feature the introductory section, although parts of it are damaged: al-Ṣan'ānī, 'Abd al-Razzāq ibn Hammām al-Ṣan'ānī. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīz al-musammā Tafsīr 'Abd al-Razzāq*. 2 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Muṭī' Amin Qal'ajī. Beirut, Dār al-Ma'rifa: 1991. Again, both editors point out that due to the quality of the manuscript, various sources were used to reconstruct and collate the edited edition, although Qal'ajī referred to both the available manuscripts.
- 39 For more on the nature of authorship in these periods see Harald Motzki. 'The Collection of the Qur'ān: a Reconsideration of Western Views in Light of Recent Methodological Developments.' *Der Islam* (2001), pp. 2–34. Harald Motzki. 'The Author and his Work in the Islamic Literature of the First Centuries: the Case of 'Abd al-Razzāq's *Muṣannaf*.' *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (2003:28), pp. 1–31. Harald Motzki. 'The *Muṣannaf* of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī as a Source of Authentic *aḥādīth* of the First Century.' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* (1991:50), pp. 1–21. See the study of this *tafsīr* by Versteegh: *Arabic Grammar and Qur'ānic Exegesis*, pp. 154–159. Note the prominence of al-Kalbī as an informant in the *tafsīr*.
- 40 Ibn Ḥajar's *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, vol. 6, pp. 71–74. He is described as being more pious than Ibn al-Qāsim, but that his piety prevented him from taking up official positions. And al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn. *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, vol. 9, pp. 223–234. Brought up in Egypt, Ibn Wahb is viewed as the chief authority for traditions sourced to Egyptian scholars and the *Ahl al-Ḥijāz*.
- 41 Ibn Wahb's *Jāmi'* was transmitted by 'Isā ibn Miskīn 'an Ṣahnūn (160–240/776–854), the Egyptian Qaḍī, and part of the text was published by Miklos Muranyi: 'Abd Allāh ibn Wahb, *Al-Ġāmi'*: *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān (Die Koranexegese)*. Herausgegeben und kommentiert von Miklos Muranyi. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1993. He also edited *Al-Ġāmi'*: *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān Koranexegese 2 Teil I*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995. And the work on the Qur'ānic sciences '*Abd Allāh b. Wahb: al-Ġāmi'*'. *Die Koranwissenschaften*. Edited by Miklos Muranyi.

- Wiesbaden, 1992. Interestingly, while discussing Muranyi's work on a page of a legal manuscript which he claims goes back to 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Mājashūn, Melchert points out that 'here as elsewhere goes back only to the late third/ninth century.' Christopher Melchert 'The Early History of Islamic Law.' In *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003. Edited by Herbert Berg, pp. 293–324, p. 305. Melchert argues that a shrewd reading of the texts from the third century will progress the study of the history of Islamic law, but takes a sceptical view of the use of fragments comprising materials attributed to earlier scholars (p. 305). Muranyi has published a number of Ibn Wahb's works: Miklos Muranyi: *'Abd Allāh b. Wahb. Leben und Werk. al-Muwatta'*. *Kitāb al-muḥāraba*. Wiesbaden 1992. Rippin links the contents of the *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* text with Abū 'Ubayd's *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān* (see Chapter 10, 'Studying Early *tafsīr* Texts').
- 42 al-Zubaydī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan. *Ṭabaqāt al-naḥwiyyīn*. Edited by Muḥammad Abū'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1973, pp. 219–59. Also see Ahmad Mukhtār Omar. 'Grammatical Studies in Early Egypt.' In *Studies in the History of Arabic Grammar II*. Edited by Kees Versteegh and Michael Carter. *Proceedings of the Second Symposium on the History of Arabic Grammar*. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1990, pp. 239–51. It is worth mentioning the endeavour of Ghāzī ibn Qays (d. 199/814) who, according to Abū 'Amr al-Dānī, was the first individual to disseminate the reading of Nāfi' in al-Andalus along with the *Muwatta'* of Mālik. He was often quoted by al-Dānī in his work on Qur'ānic codices as a specialist on orthography and linked with a number of exegetes including Ibn Jurayj. See his biography in al-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ's *Tartīb al-madārik wa-taqrīb al-masālik li ma'rifat al-'lām madhhab Mālik*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Sālim Hāshim. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1998, vol. 1, p. 200. See also al-Dānī, Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān ibn Sa'īd. *al-Muqni' fī ma'rifat marsūm maṣāḥif ahl al-amṣār*. Edited by M. Dahmān. Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1983. See for example *Muqni'*, pp. 21, 24, 26, 47, 52, 57, 58, 64, 70, 74, 75, 79, 94.
- 43 Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Jarḥ*, vol. 9, p. 155; al-Dāwūdī. *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*. vol. 2, pp. 381–382. Ibn al-Jazarī, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad. *Ghāyat al-nihāya fī ṭabaqāt al-qurrā'*. Edited by Gotthelf Bergsträsser & Otto Pretzl. Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Sa'āda, 1935, vol. 2, p. 373. There appear to be conflicting views about his reliability as a *ḥadīth* transmitter: see Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 8, pp. 447–8.
- 44 Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī. *Fahrassa*. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1998, pp. 23–68.
- 45 Various portions of Yaḥyā's *tafsīr* have been published in Tunis and Ibn Abī Zamanīn, did include the original text in his commentary: see Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Zamanīn, Abū 'Abd Allāh. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīz*. 5 vols. Edited by Husayn ibn 'Ukāsha and Muḥammad ibn Muṣṭafā al-Kanz. Cairo: Al-Fārūq al-Ḥadīthiyya Li'l-Ṭibā'a wa'l-Nashr, 2002. vol. 1, p. 114. Yaḥyā ibn Sallām is reported to have asserted that one can only know the *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān if one is aware of certain qualities of the text: see Ibn Abī Zamanīn, Abū 'Abd Allāh. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīz*, vol. 1, p. 114. Cf. Parts of Yaḥyā ibn Sallām's *tafsīr*. Edited by Hind Shalabī. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2004.
- 46 See Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh Ibn Abī Zamanīn, Abū 'Abd Allāh. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīz*. 5 vols. Interestingly, in the introduction to the work, Ibn Abī Zamanīn explains that he read Yaḥyā's book and found that it has lots of repetition and traditions which are superfluous to the actual exegesis of individual verses and rendered the book lengthy. He set about abbreviating the work in a way which would make the work accessible to students of his day. Al-Dānī

- regularly uses the work in his writings. See the dissertation by 'Alī al-'Umarī entitled *al-Ikhtisār fī l-tafsīr: Dirāsa naẓariyya wa-dirāsa taḥbiqīyya 'ālā mukhtaṣaray Ibn Abī Zamanīn li-tafsīr Yaḥyā ibn Sallām wa'l-Baghawī li-tafsīr al-Tha'labī*. Mecca: Umm al-Qurā University, 1425 A.H.
- 47 See the introduction by the editor: Hūd ibn Muḥakkam. *Tafsīr Kitāb Allāh al-'Azīz*. Edited by Bi'l-Ḥājj al-Sharīfī. 4 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1990. Also see the extended study by Claude Gilliot. 'Le commentaire coranique de Hūd b. Muḥakkam/Muḥkim.' *Arabica* (1997:44), pp. 179–233. Sulaiman al-Shuaili. 'Ibādī *Tafsīr*: A Comparison Between the Tafsīrs of Hūd al-Huwwārī and Sa'īd al-Kindī'. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Edinburgh University, 2001. Also vocalized as Muḥkim. Some materials from the aforementioned *tafsīr* manuscripts are considered in the study by Miklos Muranyi: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Ḥadīth- und Rechtsgelehrsamkeit der Mālikīyya in Nordafrika bis zum 5. Jh. D.H.: Bio-bibliographische Notizen aus der Moscheebibliothek von Qairawān* (Quellenstudien zur Ḥadīth- und Rechtsliteratur in Nordafrika). Harrassowitz Verlag: Wiesbaden, 1997. This briefly includes the work of al-Jahḍamī, the author of the *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (see below).
- 48 Al-Farrā', Abū Zakariyyā' Yaḥyā ibn Ziyād. *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Aḥmad Yūsuf Najātī and Muḥammad 'Alī al-Najjār. 3 vols. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1955–72. al-Farrā''s other works include: *al-Maqṣūr wa'l-mamdūd*. Edited by Majīd al-Dhahabī. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1983; *al-Mudhakkār wa'l-mu'annath*. Edited by Ramaḍān 'Abd al-Tawwāb. Cairo: Maktabat al-Turāth, n.d. See also N. Kinberg's *A Lexicon of al-Farrā''s Terminology in his Qur'ān Commentaries, with Full Definitions, English Summaries, and Extensive Citations*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996. Ramzi Baalbaki. Abū Zakariyyā', Yaḥyā ibn Ziyād al-Farrā'. 'A Difficult Passage in Farrā''s *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*.' *Bulletin d'Études Orientales* (1983:35), pp. 13–18. See also Mahdī Makhzūmī. *Madrasat al-Kūfa wa-manhajuhā fī dirāsāt al-luḡa wa'l-naḥw*. 2nd edn. Cairo: Maṭba'at Muṣṭafā al-Bābī, 1958. And his *Al-Dars al-naḥwī fī Baghdād*. Baghdād: Dār al-Rā'id al-'Arabī, 1984. Kinga Dévényi. 'Lexical Index to al-Farrā''s *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*.' Kinga Dévényi. 'Lexical Index to al-Farrā''s *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*.' *The Arabist* (1990:6–7), pp. 59–74. Kinga Dévényi. 'Farrā''s linguistic methods in his work *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*.' In *Studies in the History of Arabic Grammar II. Proceedings of the Second Symposium on the History of Arabic Grammar*. Hartmut Bobzin & Kees Versteegh. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1990, pp. 101–9. Kinga Dévényi 'Al-Farrā' and al-Kisā'i: References to Grammarians and Qur'ān Readers in the *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* of al-Farrā'.' In *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Arabic Grammar*. Edited by Kinga Dévényi & Tamas Iványi. Budapest, 1991, pp. 159–76. Cf. Kinga Dévényi. 'Mujāwara: a Crack in the Building of *i'rāb*.' *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* (1988:5–6), pp. 196–207.
- 49 Al-Farrā', Abū Zakariyyā' Yaḥyā ibn Ziyād. *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 14. The word '*i'rāb*' is used in the text and one senses in this context that it embodies the finer features of the language as opposed to simply grammatical inflection.
- 50 See Ibn Taymiyya, Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm. *Majmū'*, vol. 16, p. 155. Criticism of the 'arabiyya-based approach is set out by the same author: see *al-I'tirādāt al-Miṣriyya 'ālā al-futūyā al-Ḥamawiyya*. Muḥammad Shams. Jeddah: Dār 'Ālam al-Fawā'id, n.d. pp. 9–31. The text has a considerable amount of materials devoted to hermeneutical issues within *tafsīr*. For material on the theology of al-Farrā' see the studies of al-Farrā''s work completed by Edmund Beck: 'Die dogmatisch religiöse Einstellung des Grammatikers Yaḥyā b. Ziyād al-Farrā'.' *Le Muséon* (1951:64), pp. 187–202. Translated by Michael Bonner as 'The Dogmatic Religious Stance of the Grammarian Yaḥyā ibn Ziyād al-Farrā' in

- The Qur'ān: Formative Interpretation*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Aldershot: Variorum, 1999, pp. 137–158. *Idem*. 'Arabiyya, Sunna und 'Āmma in der Koranlesung des zweiten Jahrhunderts.' *Orientalia* (1946:15), pp. 180–224. *Idem*. 'Studien zur Geschichte der Küfischen Koranlesung in den Beiden Ersten Jahrhunderten.' *Orientalia* (1948:17), pp. 326–55. *Idem*. 'Studien zur Geschichte der Küfischen Koranlesung in den Beiden Ersten Jahrhunderten, III.' *Orientalia* (1951:20), pp. 316–328. Adrian Brockett. 'The Value of Ḥaṣṣ and Warsh Transmissions for the Textual History of the Qur'ān.' In *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 31–45. Rafael Talmon. 'The Philosophising Farrā': An Interpretation of an Obscure Saying Attributed to the Grammarian Tha'lab.' In *Studies in the History of Arabic Grammar II. Proceedings of the Second Symposium on the History of Arabic Grammar*. Edited by Kees Versteegh and Michael Carter Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1990, pp. 265–79. *Idem*. *Arabic Grammar in its Formative Age, Kitāb al-'Ayn and its Attribution to Khalīl Ibn Aḥmad*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997. *Idem*. 'From the History of the Study of Qur'ānic Syntax', *Tradition and Innovation: Norm and Deviation in Arabic and Semitic Linguistics*. Ed. Lutz Edzard and Mohammed Nekroumi. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), pp. 71–77. *Idem*. 'An Eighth-Century Grammatical School in Medinah: The Collection and Evaluation of the Available Material', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1985:48), pp. 224–36. *Idem*. 'Schacht's Theory in the Light of Recent Discoveries Concerning the Origins of Arabic Grammar.' *Studia Islamica* (1987–8), pp. 31–50.
- 51 His work was 'reconstructed' by collating dicta attributed to him in various sources. Note the *Mushtabihāt al-Qur'ān*, also referred to *Mutashābihāt*, has been republished by Āl-Yāsīn in *Abḥāth fī ta'rīkh al-'arabiyya wa-maṣādirihā*. Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1996, pp. 123–42. See John Wansbrough's discussion of the work in *Qur'ānic Studies*, pp. 212–5. And Rippin's discussion of the issue of dating early materials in Chapter 11 of the Collection. The traditional sources relate that 'Alī ibn al-Mubārak al-Aḥmar (d. 194/810) was responsible for codifying the works of Kisā'ī. See Ibn al-Anbārī. *Nuzhat al-alibbā' fī ṭabaqāt al-uḍabā'*. Edited by Ibrāhīm al-Samarā'ī. al-Zarqā': Maktabat al-Manār, 1985, p. 80. One needs to bear in mind that the traditional biographical sources place both al-Kisā'ī and al-Farrā' as students of Abū Ja'far al-Ru'āsī, who is said to have been the author of a *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* text.
- 52 The *qirā'āt* encapsulate the corpus of readings which Muslim scholarship associated with the Qur'ān's textual transmission and recitation. The consensus readings are not radical variations of the standard text but traditionally reflect subtle distinctions which appear at the morpho-syntactic and morpho-phonological levels: they encompass a whole range of vocalic and consonantal variants; and even phonological traits; they are therefore viewed as variations anchored to the skeletal text (*rasm*) of the Qur'ān and seen as being ostensibly univocal. The more pronounced variants do feature consonantal variants and manifest instances of exegetical interpolation which are declared non-liturgical by traditional scholarship. So al-Kisā'ī's reading constituted his synthesis of transmitted conventions of the recitation of the text which would have been attributed by him to earlier authorities: Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qaṣṭallānī, *Laṭā'if al-ishārāt li-funūn al-qirā'āt*. Edited by 'Abd al-Ṣabūr Shāhīn and 'Āmir al-Sayyid 'Uthmān. Cairo: Lajnat Ihya' al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1972; al-Imām Abū Zur'a, *Hujjat al-qirā'āt*. Edited by Sa'd al-Afghānī. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1979. A glossary of readings is provided in 'Abd al-Salām Makram and Aḥmad Mukhtār 'Umar, *Mu'jam al-qirā'āt al-Qur'āniyya ma'a muqaddima fi'l-qirā'āt wa-ashhar al-qurrā'*. 8 vols.

- Kuwait: Dhāt al-Salāsīl, 1982–85. Ramzi Baalbaki, 'The Treatment of *qir'āt* by the Second and Third Century Grammarians.' *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* (1985:15), pp. 11–32. See also the more recent Yasin Dutton. 'Orality, Literacy, and the Seven *ḥurūf*.' *Journal of Islamic Studies* (2012:23.1), pp. 1–49. Christopher Melchert. 'The Relation of the Ten Readings to One Another.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2008:10.2), pp. 73–87. Mustafa Shah. 'The Early Arabic Grammarians' Contributions to the Collection and Authentication of Qur'ānic Readings: The Prelude to Ibn Mujāhid's *Kitāb al-sab'a*,' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2004:6.1), pp. 72–102. Christopher Melchert, 'Ibn Mujāhid and the Establishment of Seven Qur'ānic Readings', *Studia Islamica* (2000:91), pp. 5–22. Fred Leemhuis. 'From Palm Leaves to the Internet.' In *Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*. Edited by J. McAuliffe, pp. 145–61. Claude Gilliot, 'Creation of a Fixed Text.' Edited by J. McAuliffe, pp. 41–57. Arthur Jeffery, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'ān*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1937. Ibn Abī Dawūd al-Sijistānī, 'Abd Allāh Sulaymān Ibn Ash'ath. *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1985.
- 53 al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ, Abū'l-Ḥasan Sa'īd ibn Mas'ada. *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Fā'iz Fāris. 3rd edn. 2 vols. Kuwait: Dār al-Bashīr, 1981. For the biographical anecdotes see al-Qifṭī, Jamāl al-Dīn. *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt 'alā anbāḥ al-nuḥāt*. 4 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Abū'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1956. Vol. 2, pp. 36–43. Al-Sirāfī, Abū Sa'īd al-Ḥasan ibn 'Abd Allāh. *Akhbār al-naḥwiyyīn al-Baṣriyyīn*. Edited by Muḥammad al-Bannā Cairo: Dār al-I'tisām, 1985, p. 66.
 - 54 Abū 'Ubayda, Ma'mar ibn al-Muthannā. *Majāz al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Fu'āt Sezgin. 2nd edn. 2 vols. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1981.
 - 55 Abū 'Ubayda's use of the term *majāz* was at the centre of arguments about the existence of metaphor in Arabic: see Ibn Taymiyya, Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm. 1983. *Kitāb al-Īmān*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, p. 80. This is derived from Ibn Taymiyya's *Majmū'*.
 - 56 Abū 'Ubayda, *Majāz*, vol. I, p. 8. Philologists often appealed to a phenomenon called *tawāfuq*, 'relative coincidence' to explain perceived lexical parallels in meaning and usage among the vocabularies of different languages. It is a concept to which many of Abū 'Ubayda's linguist peers referred and it is reiterated by al-Ṭabarī in the extensive introduction to his commentary.
 - 57 Wilferd Madelung, 'Abū 'Ubayda Ma'mar B. Muthannā as a Historian.' *Journal of Islamic Studies* (1992:3.1), pp. 47–56. And it is notable that al-Akhfash is accused of plagiarising Abū 'Ubayda's *tafsir*: Zubaydī, *Ṭabaqāt al-naḥwiyyīn*, p. 73 ff.
 - 58 al-Zubaydī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan. *Ṭabaqāt al-naḥwiyyīn*, p. 176.
 - 59 It is striking that al-Farrā' actually uses his *Ma'ānī* to question Abū 'Ubayda's analysis of Q.1:7. He asserts that 'Someone who has no knowledge of *'arabiyya* claims that the meaning of *ghayr* in Q.1:7 is equivalent to *siwā* (an exceptive particle) and that *lā* is *ṣilā* (linguistically redundant).' Such references confirm the levels of scholarly interaction among early individuals. Ibn al-Nadīm includes a report which states that due to the utter contempt in which he was held by his Basran colleagues no one attended his funeral. The sources also disparage his unkempt appearance and even his faith is questioned. See *Fihrist*, p. 59. Cf. R. Sellheim, *Die Gelehrtenbiographien des Abū 'Ubaydallāh al-Marzubānī in der Rezension des Ḥāfiẓ al-Yaghmurī*, Bibliotheca Islamica. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1964, p. 124.
 - 60 Many other grammarians do refer to *al-ḥurūf al-zawā'id* but it would seem that the frequency with which Abū 'Ubayda invokes this phenomenon is contentious. Thus, in his analysis of the language of scripture. Al-Zajjāj voices reservations

- whilst discussing Q.2:34. Abū 'Ubayda had suggested that the particle which introduces the verse was otiose, '*min al-ḥurūf al-zawā'id*': *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān wa-ī'rābuhu*, vol. 1, p. 108. The editor of the text notes that al-Ṭabarī, al-Naḥḥās, and al-Mubarrad objected to his reference to *ḥurūf al-zawā'id* in this instance. See al-Zarkashī's *Burhān*, vol. 2, pp. 177–8 in which he mentions that notable Zāhirite scholars took exception to the use of the term.
- 61 Al-Dāwudī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī. *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*. Edited by A.M. 'Umar. 2 vols. Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 1977, vol. 1, pp. 105–7.
 - 62 Al-Jahḍamī. *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. Edited by 'Amir Hasan Ṣabrī. Beirut: Dār ibn Ḥazm, 2006. See the *Fihrist* for a discussion of al-Jahḍamī's legacy: Ibn al-Nadīm, p. 40. cf. al-Khaṭīb's *Ta'rīkh Baghdād*. See the introduction by Ṣabrī in which he lists all the works on the subject. Al-Shāfi'ī is said to have authored a work on the topic which is lost; a different collection of material attributed to him on the subject was separately put together by al-Bayhaqī and circulated under the title *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*.
 - 63 Ibn Qutayba, Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh ibn Muslim. *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Aḥmad Ṣaqr. 2nd edn. Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, 1973. Ibn Qutayba, Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh ibn Muslim. *al-Qurṭayn (Kitābay Mushkil al-Qur'ān wa-gharībuh li-Ibn Qutaybah: ta'līf Ibn Muṭarrif al-Kinānī*. Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Khanjī, 1937. The author has conflated two works, one of which is the *gharīb al-Qur'ān* while the other is the *Ta'wīl*. Cf. Yusuf Rahman, 'Ellipsis in the Qur'ān: a Study of Ibn Qutayba's *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān*. *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'ān*. Edited by Issa J. Boullata. London: Curzon, 2000, pp. 277–291. See also al-Harawī, Abū 'Ubayd Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. *al-Gharībayn fī'l-Qur'ān wa'l-ḥadīth*. Edited by Aḥmad Farīd al-Mazīdī. Mecca, Riyāḍ: Maktabat al-Bāz, 1999.
 - 64 Al-Zajjāj, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn al-Sarī. *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān wa-ī'rābuhu*. 5 vols. Edited by A. Shalabī. Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1988. al-Naḥḥās, Abū Ja'far Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. *Irāb al-Qur'ān*. 5 vols. Edited by Zuhayr Ghāzī Zāhid. 3rd edn. Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1988. It was Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī who authored a work which questioned aspects of the grammatical analyses presented by al-Zajjāj in this work: *Kitāb al-ighfāl*. Edited by 'Abd Allāh Ibrāhīm. Ḍahrān, n.d. cf. The study of this work by 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Ismā'īl, Shalabī, *Abū 'Alī al-Fārisī: ḥayātuhu wa-makānatuhu bayn a'immat al-lughā wa-atharuhu fī'l-qirā'āt wa'l-naḥw*. Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahḍa, A.H. 1377, pp. 472–487. Other related works include Al-'Ukbarī, Abū'l-Baqā' 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Abd Allāh. *Imlā' mā manna bihi al-Raḥmān min wujūh al-I'rāb wa'l-qirā'āt fī jam' al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1979. Al-'Ukbarī, Abū'l-Baqā' 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Abd Allāh. 2 vols. *Al-Tibyān fī i'rāb al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1998. Makkī ibn Abī Tālib, Abū Muḥammad. *Kitāb al-Tabṣira fī'l-qirā'āt*. Edited by M. Ramaḍān. Kuwait: Manshūrāt Ma'had al-Makhtūṭāt al-'Arabiyya, 1985.
 - 65 'Alī ibn Faḍḍāl al-Majāshi'ī. *al-Nukat fī'l-Qur'ān*. For a biography see al-Qiftī, Jamāl al-Dīn. *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt*. vol. 2, pp. 36–3, pp. 299–301. Cf. Ibn al-Zubayr al-Thaqafī, Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm. *Al-Burhān fī tanasub suwar al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Sa'īd ibn Jumu'a al-Fallāḥ. Riyāḍ: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1428 A.H.
 - 66 Works which focus purely on issues of narration include: Ibn Mujāhid, *Kitāb al-Sab'a fī'l-qirā'āt*, ed. Shawqī Ḍayf, 2nd edn. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, A.H. 1400. al-Azharī, Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. *Kitāb Ma'ānī al-qirā'āt*, ed. E. Mubārak & E. Qawzī. 4 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1991. Makkī ibn Abī Tālib, Abū Muḥammad. *İbāna 'an ma'ānī al-qirā'āt*. Edited by 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Shalabī. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1985. Al-Kirmānī, Abū'l-'Alā', Muḥammad ibn Abī

- al-Maḥāsin. *Maḥāṣin al-aghānī fī al-qirā'āt wa'l-ma'ānī*. Edited by 'Abd al-Karīm Muṣṭafā Mudlīj. Beirut: Dar Ibn Ḥazm, 2001. Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib. *Kitāb al-kashf 'an wujūh al-qirā'āt al-sab' wa-'ilalihā wa-hujajihā*. Edited by M. Ramaḍān. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1981. Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān ibn Sa'īd al-Dānī. *Kitāb al-taysīr fī l-qirā'āt al-sab'*. Edited by Otto Pretzl. Istanbul: Staatsdruckerei, 1930. Ibn al-Jazarī, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad. *al-Nashr fī l-qirā'āt al-'ashr*. Edited by 'Alī Muḥammad al-Ḍabbā'. 2 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, n.d. For inventories of the readings see 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Khaṭīb, *Mu'jam al-qirā'āt*. 10 vols. Damascus: Dār Sa'd al-Dīn, 2002. Meir Bar-Asher. 'Variant Readings and Additions of the Imamī Shī'ite to the Qur'ān'. *Israel Oriental Studies* (1993:13), pp. 39–74. Adrian Brockett, 'Qur'ān Readings in *Kitāb Sībawayhi*', *Occasional Papers of the School of Abbasid Studies*, University of St. Andrews, (1988:2), pp. 129–206. *Idem*, 'The Value of Ḥaḥṣ and Warsh Transmissions for the Textual History of the Qur'ān'. *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 31–45. Imam Ahmad. *Variant Readings of the Qur'ān: A Critical Study of their Historical and Linguistic Origins*. Herndon, Virginia: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1998. Arthur Jeffery, 1936. 'The Qur'ān Readings of Zaid b. 'Alī.' *Rivista degli studi orientali* 16, pp. 249–89. Arthur Jeffery, 'The Qur'ān Readings of Ibn Miqṣam.' In *Ignaz Goldziher Memorial Volume*. 2 vols. Edited by S. Lowinger & J. de Somogyi Budapest: Globus, 1958, pp. 1–38. Leah Kinberg. 'The Standardisation of Qur'ān Readings: The Testimonial Value of Dreams.' In *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Arabic Grammar*. Edited by Kinga Dévényi and Tamas Ivanyi. Budapest: 1991, pp. 223–38.
- 67 Ibn Jinnī, Abū'l-Faṭḥ 'Uthmān. *al-Muḥtasab fī tabyīn wujūh shawādh dh al-qirā'āt wa'l-idāh 'anhā*. Edited by 'Alī al-Najdī Nāṣif, 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Najjār, 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Shalabī. 2 vols. Cairo: Lajnat Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, A.H. 1387. Gotthelf Bergsträsser. *Nichtkanonische Koranlesarten im Muḥtasab des ibn Ginnī*. Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. München, 1933. al-Fārisī, al-Hasan ibn Aḥmad Abū 'Alī. *al-Hujja fī 'ilal al-qirā'āt al-sab'*. 2 vols. Edited by Shalabī, Nāṣif, Najjār & Najjā. Cairo: al-Hay'at al-Miṣriyya, 1983. Ibn Khālawayhi, Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad. *al-Hujja fī l-qirā'āt al-sab'*. Edited by 'Abd al-Āl Sālim Makram. Beirut: Dār al-Shurūq, 1971. See also the comprehensive and impressive commentary by Makkī: Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib. *al-Hidāya ilā bulūgh al-nihāya fī 'ilm ma'ānī al-Qur'ān wa-tafsīrihi wa-aḥkāmihī wa-jumal min funūn 'ulūmihi*. 13 vols. Edited as a joint collection of doctoral theses. United Arab Emirates: Shāriqa University, 2008. Ibn Khālawayhi, Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad. *I'rāb thalathūn sūra min al-Qur'ān*, Cairo and Beirut: Maktabat al-Mutanabbī, n.d. *Ibid*. Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad. *Mukhtaṣar fī shawādh dh al-Qur'ān*. Cairo: Maktabat al-Mutanabbī, n.d. Later works include al-Shāṭibī's *Ibrāz al-ma'ānī* and the *I'rāb al-qirā'āt al-shawādh dh* of al-'Ukbarī (538–616/1143–1219). See al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān* (section 41 on knowledge of *i'rāb*), who includes within the genre the *Mushkil* work of Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib along with works by al-Hūfī, al-'Ukbarī, al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, whose work was abridged by al-Ṣafāqūsī, and the *tafsīr* of Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī. A steady stream of works which pursued similar themes appeared over successive periods, including the *Fawā'id fī mushkil al-Qur'ān* authored by 'Izz ibn 'Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1261). See also al-Mubarrad's work on homonyms in the Qur'ān: *Ma'akhtalafa lafẓuhu wa'akhtalafa ma'nahu*. Edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad Sulaymān Abū Ra'd. Kuwait: Wizārāt al-Awqāf. 1988. For a modern work see Muḥiyy al-Dīn Darwīsh. 10 vols. *I'rāb al-Qur'ān al-Karīm wa-bayānuhu*. Damascus, Beirut: Dār Ibn

- Kathīr; al-Yamāma, 1980–1992. ‘Abd Allāh Wayahbī. *‘Izz al-Dīn ibn ‘Abd al-Salām: Hayātuhu wa-āthārahu wa-manhajahu fī l-tafsīr*. Riyāḍ: Wizārat al-Ma‘ārif, 1982. See also ‘Izz al-Dīn ibn ‘Abd al-Salām’s *nubadh(un) min maqāsid kitāb illāh al-‘azīz*. Edited by Ayman ‘Abd al-Razzāq. Damascus: Maktabat al-Ghazzālī, 1995.
- 68 This will be discussed in detail below. He is also mentioned as the author of *Kitāb al-lughāt fī l-Qur‘ān* and *Masā’il Nāfi‘ ibn al-Azraq*. These texts were the subject of detailed studies by John Wansbrough and Andrew Rippin. Wansbrough pointed out that the substance of the arguments adduced in these treatises betrayed ‘an exegetical method considerably posterior to the activity of Ibn ‘Abbās’. (*Q.S.*, pp. 216–8). Wansbrough felt that the citation of profane literature as a tool of scriptural explication would not have been employed in the early Islamic exegetical tradition. And the authenticity of the famous report in which Ibn ‘Abbās refers to poetry being the register of the Arabs is questioned. Andrew Rippin produced a study of the three treatises attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās, and concluded that the treatise entitled *al-Lughāt fī l-Qur‘ān* comprised stratum of ‘discrete methodologies and terminologies.’
- 69 Mustafa Shah. ‘Exploring the Genesis of Early Arabic Linguistic Thought: Qur’ānic Readers and Grammarians of the Kūfan Tradition.’ (Part I). *Journal of Qur’ānic Studies* (2003:5:1), pp. 47–78. And ‘Exploring the Genesis of Early Arabic Linguistic Thought: Qur’ānic Readers and Grammarians of the Baṣran Tradition.’ (Part II). *Journal of Qur’ānic Studies* (2003:5:2) pp. 1–48. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*. vol. 1, pp. 67–8. Yāqūt mentions that ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad al-Azdī al-Kūfī conflated the *tafsīr* works of Abān, al-Kalbī, and (Ibn) Abū Rawq ‘Aṭīyya ibn al-Ḥārith (d. 140/757), collating the points of exegesis concerning which they agreed and disagreed. Ibn Sa’d notes that Abū Rawq was the author of a *tafsīr*: Ibn Sa’d, vol 6, p. 369. While, elsewhere it is mentioned that he transmitted the views of al-Sha’bī and al-Ḍaḥḥāk, adding that Sufyān al-Thawrī transmitted his views: Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ*, vol 6, p. 382.
- 70 See *Fihrist*, p. 276
- 71 Al-Qurtubī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Anṣārī. *al-Jāmi‘ lī aḥkām al-Qur‘ān wa’l-mubayyin lima taḍammnahū min al-sunna wa-ayyi’l-furqān*. 21 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1988. For example: see vol. 1, p. 279, p. 291; vol. 2, p. 105; vol. 3, p. 110, p. 192; vol. 4, p. 148; vol. 7, 252; vol. 8, p. 57, p. 76; vol. 10, p. 218, p. 248, p. 262; vol. 11, p. 85, p. 144; vol. 13, p. 14, p. 44; vol. 17, p. 130; vol. 18, p. 136; vol. 19, p. 61, p. 179; vol. 20, p. 103. And these references feature his comments on lexical paraphrase and the narrations of readings. See the work on the legacy of al-Qurtubī by al-Qaṣabī Maḥmūd Zalaṭ. *Al-Qurtubī wa-manhajahu fī l-tafsīr*. Cairo: Dār al-Anṣār, 1979.
- 72 For more on the figures see: Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qifṭī. *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt* and Ibn al-Anbārī. *Nuzhat al-alibbā’*. Mu’arrij was a pupil of the 2nd/8th century figure al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad himself renowned for devising the first Arabic lexicon, the *Kitāb al-Ayn*.
- 73 al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī, Abū’l-Qāsim al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad. *Mu‘jam mufradāt alfāz al-Qur‘ān*. Edited by Nadīm Mar’ashlī. Beirut: Dār al-Kātib al-‘Arabī, 1972. Abū Hayyān al-Gharnāṭī. *Tuḥfat al-arīb bimā fī l-Qur‘ān min al-gharīb*. Aleppo: Maṭba‘āt al-Ikhlāṣ. 1926 (A.H. 1345). Ibn al-Mulaqqin, Sirāj al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar ibn Abī al-Ḥasan. *Tafsīr gharīb al-Qur‘ān*. Edited by Samīr Ṭaha al-Majdhūb. Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1987. Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib. *Kitāb Tafsīr al-mushkil min gharīb al-Qur‘ān al-‘azīm’alā al-ijāz wa’l-ikhtisār*. Edited by Hudā al-Mar’ashlī. Beirut: Dār al-‘Ulūm al-Islāmī, 1988. Al-Sijistānī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ‘Azīz. *Nuzhat al-qulūb (gharīb al-Qur‘ān)*. Cairo: Maṭba‘āt ‘Alī Muḥammad Ṣubayḥ, 1963. Ibn al-Anbārī, Kamāl al-Dīn Abū’l-Barakāt.

- Al-Bayān fī gharīb i'rāb al-Qur'ān*. 2 vols. Edited by Ṭaha 'Abd al-Ḥamīd and Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā'. Cairo: al-Hay'at al-Miṣriyya, 1969. Ibn al-Hā'im, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. *Al-Tibyān fī tafsīr gharīb al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Ḍāḥī 'Abd al-Bāqī. Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2003. Al-Jawālīqī, Abū Maṣṣūr Mawḥūb ibn Aḥmad. *al-Mu'arrab min kalām al-a'jamī 'alā ḥurūf al-mu'jam*. Edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir. Cairo: Maṭba'at Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, n.d. See also Andrew Rippin. 'Lexicographical Texts and the Qur'ān.' In *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*, pp. 158–74.
- 74 Muqātil, vol. 1, p. 27.
- 75 al-Tha'labī, Abū Ishāq Aḥmad. *Al-Kashf wa'l-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Abū Muḥammad ibn 'Ashūr. Revised and reviewed by Naẓīr al-Sā'idī. 10 vols. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 2002, vol. 1, p. 75. See Saleh's remarks on the manuscripts used for this edition in his *The Formation of the Classical tafsīr Tradition*, pp. 6–8. Cf. al-Tha'labī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. *Qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā' al-musammā 'arā'is al-majālis*. Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 1955. See William Brinner. *Arā'is al-majālis fī qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā' (Lives of the Prophets as Recounted by Abū Ishāq Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Tha'labī)*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- 76 See Suleiman Ali Mourad. 'The Revealed Text and the Intended Subtext: Notes on the Hermeneutics of the Qur'ān in Mu'tazila Discourse as Reflected in the *Tahdhīb* of al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101).' In *Islamic Philosophy, Science, Culture, and Religion: Studies in Honor of Dimitri Gutas*. Eds. Felicitas Opwis & David Reisman. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2012, pp. 367–395 (Chapter 34 of the Collection). The categories are organized into three main sub-sets by Mourad, pp. 379–382. Also see Suleiman Ali Mourad. *The Mu'tazila and Qur'anic Hermeneutics: A Study of al-Ḥakīm al-Jishumī's (d. 494/1101) Exegesis (al-Tahdhīb fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān)*. Forthcoming. And Suleiman Ali Mourad. 'Ibn Khallāl (d. after 377/988) and his Oeuvre on the Problematic Verses of the Qur'ān *Kitāb al-radd 'alā al-jabriyya al-qadariyya* (Refutation of the Predestinarian Compulsionists)'. In *A Common Rationality in Islam and Judaism*. Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2008, pp. 81–99. Suleiman Ali Mourad. 'The Survival of the Mu'tazila Tradition of Qur'anic Exegesis in Shī'ī and Sunnī *tafsīr*.' *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* (2010:12), pp. 83–108. Adnān Zarzūr. *Al-Ḥakīm al-Jishumī wa-manhajuhu fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1987. Cf. Binyamin Abrahamov. *Anthropomorphism and the Interpretation of the Qur'ān in the Theology of al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm. Kitāb al-Mustarshid* edited with translation, introduction and notes. Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1996. (al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm, al-Imām al-Rassī. *al-Mustarshid fī'l-tawḥīd*).
- 77 He also speaks of *tafsīr*'s role in engaging with the general thrust of the Qur'ān's gist, allusion, and signification. Ibn Juzayy, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad, Abū'l-Qāsim. *Kitāb al-tashīl li-'ulūm al-tanzīl*, 2 Vols. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Yūnisī and Ibrāhīm Aṭwa 'Awaḍ. Ḥāshim. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, n.d., vol. 1, pp. 10–11. A useful look at the life and work of Ibn Juzayy is provided by: 'Alī Muḥammad al-Zubayr. *Ibn Juzayy wa-manhajuhu fī'l-tafsīr*. 2 vols. Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1987.
- 78 Ibn Juzayy divides his introduction into two broad sections, the first of which consists of twelve chapters: the opening chapter deals with the revelation of the Qur'ān and the traditional account of its codification; the second discusses the Meccan and Medinan proveance of its chapters and verses; the third covers the epistemic thrust of the Qur'ān and its underlying doctrinal and spiritual goals; the fourth articulates the branches of knowledges connected with the study of the Qur'ān such as abrogation, as defined above; the fifth enumerates twelve

aspects of the phenomenon of differences among exegetes and their causes; the sixth outlines the classes of exegetes and their literary legacies; the seventh returns to the subject of abrogation, which was previously placed among the sciences of the Qur'ān, and defines its different categories and the relationship it has with specification (*takhṣīs*), restriction (*taqyīd*), and exception (*istithnā*); the eighth chapter is devoted to the types of Qur'ānic recitation and their textual transmission; the ninth is also related to recitation, qualifying the sub-genre of points of inception and pauses in the reading of the text; the tenth chapter outlines basic rhetorical devices and traits relative to the Qur'ān; the eleventh constitutes a summary of the inimitability of the Qur'ān; the twelfth included dicta on the virtues of the Qur'ān. The second section of his introduction focuses on an analysis of the philological bases of lexical items from the Qur'ān which is ingeniously arranged in alphabetical order, covering nouns, verbs, and particles.

- 79 Although it has become conventional to refer to *qirā'āt* as variants, they are considered liturgically valid if they meet certain criteria. However, also existing among the corpora of *qirā'āt* are readings which form evident departures from the standard skeletal text (*rasm*); these feature consonantal variants along with graphic instances of exegetical interpolation and modifications in the word order of certain verses. See the discussion in f/n 52.
- 80 Such concerns are consistently alluded to in the prolegomena of classical *tafsīr* texts.
- 81 Underlining the importance of relying on trustworthy transmitters, Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, the *ḥadīth* critic, posited the view that there is no way of understanding anything from the meanings of the book of God nor indeed the Prophetic *sunna* without recourse to the authenticated corpus of transmitted reports (*al-naql wa'l-riwāya*), Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Al-jarḥ wa'l-ta'dīl*, vol. 1, p. 5.
- 82 Ibn Taymiyya, Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm. *Majmū' fatāwā shaykh al-Islam*. Edited by 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim. 38 vols. Riyād: Maṭba'at al-Riyād, 1961–74, vol. 13, p. 345. See the points raised by Goldziher in his discussion of al-Ṭabarī's *Tafsīr* and the reference to Q. 5:112–115. Cf. p. 90 of *Richtungen*.
- 83 Ibn Taymiyya's *Muqaddima* offers a discussion of the best methods of exegesis and proceeds by circumscribing a descending order of priorities in exegesis. The primary basis is to use the Qur'ān to interpret the Qur'ān; and that this process should be buttressed by references to the Prophetic *Sunna*. The second preferred form of exegesis relies on the attestation of the dicta ascribed to the Companions, however, he notes, this should be resorted to only if the reliance upon the Qur'ān to explicate the Qur'ān is exhausted. The third form of exegesis to which he refers is one which adduces the plethora of exegetical statements derived from the Successors, although it is pointed out that there rulings or responsa on legal issues are not technically binding (unless backed up by Prophetic authority) and therefore, equally, they are no more authoritative in matters of exegesis. Ibn Taymiyya, then switches his attention to most contentious form of exegesis *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*. It is worth comparing some of these categories with Ibn al-Wazīr, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn al-Murtaḍā. *Izhār al-ḥaqq 'alā'l-khalq fī radd al-khilāfāt ilā al-madhhab al-ḥaqq min uṣūl al-tawḥīd*, 2nd ed. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1987, pp. 146–54, which comprises a section discussing the best forms of *tafsīr*.
- 84 See the introduction to Al-Māwardī, 'Alī ibn Muḥammad. *al-Nukat wa'l-'uyūn*. 6 vols. Edited by al-Sayyid 'Abd al-Raḥīm. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, n.d., p. 21. Also see Irene Schneider. 'Vernunft oder Tradition? Abū l-Ḥasan

- 'Alī al-Māwardīs (st. 449/1058) Hermeneutik des Korans im Spiegel seiner Zeit'. *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (2006:156), pp. 57–80.
- 85 Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. 1969. *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl ayy al-Qur'ān*, 16 vols. Edited by Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākīr, Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākīr. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, vol. 1, pp. 3–7. Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. *Al-Tabṣīr fī ma'ālīm al-dīn*. Edited by 'Alī ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn 'Alī al-Shibil. Beirut: Dār al-'Āṣima, 1996. John Cooper. *The Commentary on the Qur'ān by Abū Ja'far Muḥammad B. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī Being An Abridged Translation of Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*. With an Introduction and Notes by J. Cooper. General Editors W. F. Madelung and Alan Jones. Volume I. Oxford. Oxford University Press, 1987. Heribert Horst, 'Zur Überlieferung im Korankommentar al-Ṭabarīs.' *Zeitschriften der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (1953:103): pp. 290–307.
- 86 See the works of Claude Gilliot. *Exégèse, langue, et théologie en Islam: l'exégèse coranique de Ṭabarī (m. 311/923)*. Paris, J. Vrin. 1990; *Idem*. 'La formation intellectuelle de Ṭabarī (224/5–310/839–923).' *Journal Asiatique* (1988:276.3.4), pp. 203–244. *Idem*. 'Langue et Coran selon Ṭabarī. 1. La precellence du Coran.' *Studia Islamica* (1988:68), pp. 79–106. Āmāl 'Abd al-Raḥmān Rabī, *Al-Isrā'īliyyāt fī Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī: dirāsa fī l-lūgha wa'l-maṣādir al-'ibriyya*. Cairo: Dār al-Thaqāfa al-'Arabiyya. 2000. Samir, Khalil. 'Le commentaire de Ṭabarī sur Coran 2/62 et la question du salut des non-musulmans.' *Annali Naples Instituto Orientale* (1980:30), pp. 555–617. Gösta Vitestam. 'Aṭ-Ṭabarī and the Seeing of God', *Proceedings of the 14th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants. The Arabist* (Budapest Studies in Arabic 13–14). Edited by Alexander Fodor. (1995), pp. 147–155. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Zuḥaylī. *Al-Imām al-Ṭabarī: shaykh al-mufasssīrīn wa-'umdat al-mu'arrikhīn wa-muqaddīm al-fuqahā' al-muḥaddithīn*. Damascus, Dār al-Qalam. 1990. Charfī, Abdel Majid. 'Christianity in the Qur'ān Commentary of Ṭabarī.' *Islamochristiana* (1980:6), pp. 105–48. Claude Gilliot, 'Le traitement du ḥādīth dans le *Tahdhīb al-āṭār* de Ṭabarī.' *Arabica* (1994:41.3), pp. 309–351. Mohammed Hassan Khalil. 'A Closer Look at al-Ṭabarī's Account of the Khaybar Spoils, or the Intersection of Law, Historiography, and Exegesis.' *Comparative Islamic Studies* (2007:3.1), pp. 5–21. The best study of the life and works of al-Ṭabarī is found in Franz Rosenthal's *The History of al-Ṭabarī. General Introduction and Translation From the Creation to the Flood*. New York: Albany, 1989, especially pp. 107–11.
- 87 Included among the topics were: the Arabic character of the vocabulary of the Qur'ān; etymology; dialects in which the Qur'ān was revealed; the authority of canon; exegetical categories of the Qur'ān's discourse; preset categories for the broaching of *ta'wīl*; opposition to forms of *tafsīr* which elevate personal opinion; the merits of *tafsīr*; the form and context of the Prophetic approach to *tafsīr*; Companion exegetes; and luminaries whose learning in *tafsīr* was praised and those individuals who were reprimanded.
- 88 There has been a tendency to view al-Ṭabarī's work as providing a *terminus a quo* for the appearance of such compilations. This is a point made by Ibn 'Ashūr in his history of *tafsīr*.
- 89 For other approaches to *i'jāz* see Michel Cuypers, 'Semitic Rhetoric as a Key to the Question of the *naẓm* of the Qur'ānic Text.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2011:13.1), pp. 1–24.
- 90 Al-Zarkashī: *al-Burhān*, vol. 2, p. 159.
- 91 Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū'*, vol. 13, p. 385. Muqātil is quoted only once in the work, but al-Kalbī is quoted comparatively more frequently. It would be argued that reports which included references to such figures were possibly authenticated by alternative sources.

- 92 Al-Tha'labī, *Kashf*, vol. 1, p. 75.
- 93 Abū'l-Layth al-Samarqandī, Naṣr ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm. *Baḥr al-'Ulūm*. Edited by 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwad, 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd, Zakariyya 'Abd al-Majīd. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1993. See also Hans Daiber's introduction, text and commentary: *The Islamic Concept of Belief in the 4th/10th century: Abū l-Layth as-Samarqandī's Commentary on Abū Ḥanīfa's (died 150/767) al-Fiqh al-absaṭ*. Tokyo: Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 1995.
- 94 Al-Māturīdī, Abū'l-Manṣūr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad. *Ta'wīlāt ahl al-sunna*. 4 vols. Edited by Majdī Bā Sallūm. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2005, vol. 1, pp. 352–3. See also Ulrich Rudolph. *al-Māturīdī und die sunnitische Theologie in Samarkand*. Leiden: Brill, 1997. Ahmad Galli. 'Some Aspects of Māturīdī's Commentary on the Qur'ān.' *Islamic Studies* (1982:21), pp. 3–21. Mustafa Ceric. *Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam: A Study of the Theology of Abū Manṣūr al-Maturīdī (d. 333/944)*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1995. Also see Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī. *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*. Edited by Fathalla Kholeif. Cairo: Dār al-Jāmi'āt al-Miṣriyya, n.d. See the monograph on 'Alī 'Abd al-Fattāḥ al-Maghribī. *Imām ahl al-sunna wa'l-jamā'a: Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī wa-arā'ahu al-kalāmiyya*. Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 1405/1985. J. Meric Pessagno. 'Irāda, ikhtiyār, qudra, kasb, The View of Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī.' *Studies in Islam and the Ancient Near East Dedicated to Franz Rosenthal. American Oriental Society* (1984:104.1), pp. 177–91. *Idem*. 'The Uses of Evil in Maturidian Thought.' *Studia Islamica* (1984:60), pp. 59–82. See also Joseph van Ess. *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, im 2. 3. band 2, p. 560 f. A further commentary on the text was composed by 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Samarqandī: *Ta'wīlāt al-Māturīdī*, which is a manuscript in the Salim Agha Library (no. 140). M. Mustafizur Rahman. *An Introduction to al-Māturīdī's Ta'wīlāt ahl al-sunna*. Dacca: Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, 1981.
- 95 Notably, many of the views on theological perspectives on *tafsīr* expressed by leading Mu'tazilite scholars have been collated from later sources and published as monographs: see for example: Abū'l-Qāsim al-Ka'bī al-Balkhī. *Tafsīr Abī'l-Qāsim al-Ka'bī al-Balkhī. Mawsū'at tafāsīr al-Mu'tazila*: Collated and arranged by Khaḍīr Muḥammad Nabḥā and introduction by Riḍwān al-Sayyid. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2007. Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm. *Tafsīr Abī Bakr al-Aṣamm*; followed by *Tafsīr Abī Muṣlim Muḥammad ibn Baḥr al-Aṣfahānī. Mawsū'at tafāsīr al-Mu'tazila*: Collated and arranged by Khaḍīr Muḥammad Nabḥā and introduction by Riḍwān al-Sayyid. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2007. Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī. *Tafsīr Abī 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī. Mawsū'at tafāsīr al-Mu'tazila*: Collated and arranged by Khaḍīr Muḥammad Nabḥā and introduction by Riḍwān al-Sayyid. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2007. Abū'l-Qāsim al-Ka'bī al-Balkhī. *Tafsīr Abī'l-Qāsim al-Ka'bī al-Balkhī. Mawsū'at tafāsīr al-Mu'tazila*: Collated and arranged by Khaḍīr Muḥammad Nabḥā and introduction by Riḍwān al-Sayyid. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2007. Daniel Gimaret, *Une lecture mu'tazilite du Coran: le Tafsīr d'Abū 'Alī al-Djubbā'ī (m.303/915) partiellement reconstitué à partir de ses citateurs*, Louvain: Peeters, 1994. Also see Rosalind Gwynne. *The Tafsīr of Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī: First Steps Toward a Reconstruction, with Texts, Translation, Biographical Introduction and Analytical Essay*. (Ph.D.). University of Washington, 1982. Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982.
- 96 The manuscript for this work is found in the Maktabat Fayḍ Allāh al-Afendī in Istanbul (no. 50). Only parts of the work have been published by the University of Umm al-Qurā as a series of masters theses with the original manuscript beginning from Sūrat al-Mu'minūn. Ibn Fūrak. *Tafsīr al-Imām Ibn Fūrak*. Mecca: Jāma'at Umm al-Qurā, 2009/1430 A.H. See Ibn Fūrak, Muḥammad ibn

- al-Ḥasan. *Mujarrad maqālāt al-shaykh Abī l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī: exposé de la doctrine d'al-Ash'arī*. Edited by Daniel Gimaret. Beyrouth: Dar el-Machreq, 1987 for his synthesis of the theological doctrines ascribed to al-Ash'arī. And *Idem. Kitāb Mushkil al-ḥadīth aw Ta'wīl al-akhbār al-mutashābihah*. Texte édité et commenté par Daniel Gimaret. Damascus: Institut français d'études arabes de Damas, 2003.
- 97 Qur'ān Q.3:7, states that 'it is He who has revealed to you verses of scripture which are *muḥkamāt* (perspicacious and self-evident) and others which are *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous and polyvalent)' adding that 'those who are perverted dissipate their energies seeking the meaning (*ta'wīl*) of that which is ambiguous; but its meaning is known only to God; and those firm in knowledge, saying this is all from God.' The very exegesis of this verse was the subject of profuse deliberation in the classical literature. The ambiguity concerning the grammatical structure within the verse was also the subject of much conjecture: for having asserted that its meaning is known only to God, the verse adds a further statement 'and those firm in knowledge', which some consider to be grammatically coordinate with the previous part of the verse as opposed to being inchoative.
 - 98 Al-Farrā', *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 190. He claims that these letters perplexed the Jews, although they used them to calculate and predict the historical duration of the Muslim community. See also the discussions in Al-Muḥāsibī's *Fahm al-Qur'ān*, pp. 329–31.
 - 99 Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. 1969. *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl ayy al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, pp. 170 f. And p. 174. Ibn Taymiyya, Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm. *Al-Iklīl fi'l-mutashābih wa'l-ta'wīl*. Edited by Muḥammad Saḥāta. Alexandria: Dār al-Aymān, n.d.
 - 100 Still some scholars were even arguing that *mutashābih* verses were seemingly inscrutable and known only by God. This view is attributed to al-Sha'bī and Sufyān al-Thawrī, although in the latter's *tafsīr* he simply includes a view attributed to al-Ḍaḥḥāk mentioning that *muḥkamāt* verses were abrogating ones; and *mutashābih* ones were abrogated. Thawrī, *Tafsīr*, p. 34. As mentioned above, variations à propos the grammatical parsing of the verse did allow scholars to interpret the verses in ways which justified their explanations.
 - 101 Martin Nguyen. 'Exegesis of the *ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'a*: Polyvalency in Sunnī Traditions of Qur'ānic Interpretation.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2012:14:2), pp. 1–28. Irfan Shahid. 'Fawātiḥ al-Suwar: the Mysterious Letters of the Qur'ān'. *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'ān*. Ed. I. J. Boullata. London: Curzon Press, 2000, pp. 125–139. Kevin Massey 'A New Investigation into the 'Mystery Letters' of the Qur'ān.' *Arabica* (1996:43), pp. 497–501. See his entry in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān* entitled 'Mysterious Letters', pp. 471–76. The suggestion that the names and attributes of God fell into the category of *mutashābih* is dismissed by Ibn Taymiyya. *Majmū'*, vol. 13, pp. 294–8. James Bellamy. 'The Mysterious Letters of the Koran: Old Abbreviations of the *Basmalah*.' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (1973:93), pp. 267–285. Morris Seale. 'The Mysterious Letters in the Qur'ān.' *International Congress of Orientalists* (1957), pp. 276–79. R. M. Speight. 'The Opening Verses of the Chapters of the Qur'ān.' *Muslim World* (1969:59.3/4), pp. 205–209. See also Sahiron Syamsuddin. *Muḥkam and mutashābih: An Analytical Study of al-Ṭabarī's and al-Zamakhsharī's Interpretations of Q.3:7.* *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (1999.1.1), pp. 63–79. For more on Ibn Taymiyya's critique of the philologists, particularly Ibn al-Anbārī, and his views about whether *mutashābihāt* restricted the activities of exegetes see his *Tafsīr Sūrat al-Iklāṣ* from the *Majmū'*. He even suggests that

- philologists offer views on exegesis which have no valid precedent. This has been published as a separate work: Ibn Taymiyya. *Tafsīr Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ*. Kuwait: Maktabat al-Manār al-Islāmiyya, 1977, pp. 203–4.
- 102 Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, vol. 2, p. 421. Cf. Ibn al-Wazīr, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn al-Murtaḍā. *Iḥḥār al-ḥaqq ‘alā’l-khalq fī radd al-khilāfāt ilā al-madhdhab al-ḥaqq min uṣūl al-tawḥīd*, pp. 88–90 for some of the theological implications of the discussions.
- 103 Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, vol. 2, p. 421. Cf. See Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Shams al-Dīn Abī ‘Abd Allāh. *Al-Ṣawā’iq al-mursala ‘alā al-jahmiyya wa’l-mu’aṭṭila*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. 1990.
- 104 al-Naysābūrī, al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad. *Tafsīr gharā’ib al-Qur’ān wa-raghā’ib al-Furqān*. Edited by Zakariyyā ‘Umayrāt. 5 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1996, vol. 2, pp. 105–6.
- 105 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, vol. 1, p. 74.
- 106 Ibn ‘Adī al-Jurjānī (al-Qaṭṭān) *Al-Kāmil fī du‘afā’ al-rijāl*, vol. 6, p. 2132. For the use of the *isnād* see James Robson 1953. ‘The Isnād in Muslim Tradition.’ *Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society* 15. 15–26. Goldziher, Ignaz. 1971. *Muslim Studies (Muhammedanische Studien)*. Edited by S. M. Stern. Translated from the German by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern. 2 vols. Aldine, Atherson, Chicago, New York. Joseph Schacht, 1954. *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. See also Ignaz Goldziher. *Schools of Koranic Commentators*. With an introduction on Goldziher and ḥadīth from “*Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums*” by Fuat Sezgin; edited and translated by Wolfgang H. Behn. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006. G. H. A. Juynboll, 1983. *Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early ḥadīth*, *Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilisation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. G. H. A. Juynboll. 1993. ‘Nāfi’, the *mawla* of Ibn ‘Umar, and his position in Muslim Ḥadīth literature.’ *Der Islam* (1994:70.2), pp. 207–244. Juynboll, G. H. A. 1994. “Early Islamic Society as Reflected in its Use of *isnāds*”. *Le Muséon* 107.1. 151–194. *Idem*. 1998. “Shu’ba b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 160/776) and his Position Among the Traditionists of Basra”. *Le Muséon* (1998:111), 187–226. Motzki, Harald. 2002. *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh Before the Classical Schools (Translated from the German by Marion H. Katz)*. Leiden: E.J. Brill. See also the introductory survey in Harald Motzki (ed.). 2004. *Ḥadīth: Origins and Development*. Aldershot: Variorum. And *Idem*. ‘Dating Muslim Traditions: a Survey.’ *Arabica* (2005:52.2), pp. 204–253. And Harald Motzki with Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort and Sean Anthony. 2010. *Analysing Muslim Traditions Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth*. Leiden: E.J. Brill. Harald Motzki. ‘The Origins of Muslim Exegesis. A Debate’. In *Analysing Muslim Traditions Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2010, pp. 231–303. (Chapter 15 in the Collection). And the more recent *Idem*. ‘Methods of Dating Early Legal Traditions: Introduction.’ *Islamic Law and Society* (2012:19.1.2), pp. 1–10. E. Stetter. *Topoi und Schemata im ḥadīth*. Tübingen, 1965. Wael B Hallaq. ‘On Orientalism, Self-Consciousness and History.’ *Islamic Law and Society* (2011:18.3.4) pp. 387–439.
- 107 For definitions in the *ḥadīth* literature consult al-Rāmḥurmuzī, *al-Muḥaddith al-fāṣil*; al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī. *Ma’rifat ‘ulūm al-ḥadīth*; al-Qāḍī ‘Iyād *Ilmā’ ilā ma’rifat uṣūl al-riwāya wa-taqyīd al-samā’*; Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī. *Muqaddimat* or *Kitāb Ma’rifat anwā’ ‘ilm al-ḥadīth*; Zayn al-Dīn al-‘Irāqī. *Al-Taḥqīd wa’l-īdāh*. *Idem*. *Faḥḥ al-mughīth*. Ibn Jamā’a, Badr ad-Dīn, Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm. *Al-Manḥal ar-rawīy fī mukhtaṣar ‘ulūm al-nabawī*. Edited by Muḥyī al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ramaḍān. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1986.

- 108 This is also something summarised by al-Suyūṭī: *Itqān*, vol. 2, pp. (section 80: *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*).
- 109 See al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī. *al-Jāmi' li-akhlāq al-rāwī wa-ādāb al-sāmi'*. Edited by Maḥmūd al-Taḥḥān. Riyāḍ: Maktabat, al-Ma'ārif, 1983, vol. 2, p. 162 (reports nos. 1493–1500). The actual reference by Ibn Ḥanbal to *maghāzī*, *malāḥim*, and *tafsīr* appears with different wordings in the later literature such as Ibn Taymiyya's *muqaddima fī'l-tafsīr*, which is included in the *Fatāwā*, and al-Zarkashī's *Burhān*, vol. 2, pp. 156–57, which is in section forty-one which deals with *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*. The report and its variant versions are discussed at length by Goldziher in *Die Richtungen der islamischen Koranauslegung*, pp. 57–58 cf. Harris Birkeland, *Old Muslim Opposition Against the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*. Oslo, 1956; Nabia Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri II, Qur'ānic Commentary: Maghāzī, malāḥim, and tafsīr*: the terms are respectively rendered as biography (*maghāzī*) pre-Islamic epic and adventure (*malāḥim*); and Qur'ānic commentary for more on *maghāzī* see see Martin Hind's contribution entitled 'Maghāzī and Sīra in Early Islamic Scholarship.' In *La vie du Prophète Mohomet: Colloque de Strasbourg, Octobre 1980*. Paris, 1983. Edited by Toufic Fahd, pp. 57–66. Martin Hinds concluded that the use of the term *maghāzī* in these early contexts was not especially applied to military raids but rather it served as the technical equivalent of *sīra*, and thereby encapsulated the topics of general history and biography.
- 110 Ibn Abī Ḥātim's. *al-Jarḥ wa'l-ta'dīl*. vol. 1, pp. 116–117. And vol. 7, pp. 270 f. In the same section is a report in which Sufyān claims that al-Kalbī is said to have admitted that materials he had transmitted on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās were fabrications (*loc. cit.*).
- 111 Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī. *Manāqib al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī*. 2 vols. Edited by Aḥmad Ṣaqr. Cairo: Dār al-Turath, 1970, vol. 2, p. 23.
- 112 Al-'Ijlī, Aḥmad ibn 'Abd Allāh. *Ma'rifat al-thiqāt min rijāl ahl al-'ilm wa'l-ḥadīth wa-min al-qu'afā' wa-dhikr madhāhibihim wa-akhbārihim*. 2 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-'Alīm 'Abd al-'Azīm. Arranged by Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī and Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī; with revisions by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī. n.d. n.p., vol. 1, p. 227. See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*. 1990, vol. 5, pp. 264–5. His son Muḥammad ibn Marwān was also heavily criticised on account of his untrustworthiness. See the account in al-'Uqaylī, Muḥammad ibn 'Amr: *Kitāb al-dū'afā'*. 4 vols. Edited by Ḥamdī ibn 'Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī. Riyāḍh. Dār al-Ṣamay'ī, 2000. P. 102. Al-Dhahabī confirms that Yaḥyā al-Qaṭṭān and Ibn Ḥanbal both considered him to be trustworthy, although the term *lā ba's bihi* is employed by Yaḥyā. Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. *Mizān al-i'tidāl fī naqd*, vol. 1, p. 236. See also the entry in Ibn 'Imād Shihāb al-Dīn. *Shadharāt al-dhahab fī akhbār man dhahab*. 10 Volumes. Edited by Maḥmūd al-Arnā'ūṭ. Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1998.
- 113 Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. 1969. *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl ayy al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, pp. 92–3. See also the introduction to Suddī, Abū Muḥammad Ismā'īl ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *Tafsīr al-Suddī al-Kabīr*. Collated by Muḥammad 'Āṭā Yūsuf. Al-Manṣūra: Dār al-Wafā', 1993, in which the criticisms by classical scholars of this figure are assessed.
- 114 Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. *Mizān al-i'tidāl fī naqd al-rijāl*. vol. 4, p. 175.
- 115 Ibn Taymiyya, Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm. *Minhāj al-sunna al-nabawiyya fī naqd al-shī'a wa'l-qadariyya*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1992. Edited by Muḥammad Rashād Sālim. 9 Vols. Riyāḍh: Jāmi'at Muḥammad ibn Sa'ūd, 1985, vol. 2, pp. 618–20. Cf. vol. 1, p. 56 in which he points out that figures such as al-Wāqidī, Muqātil

- can be cited for *al-i'tibār wa'l-mutāba'a* (namely: for purposes of attestation and reflection). Al-Khayyāt, Abū'l-Ḥusayn ibn 'Uthmān. *Kitāb al-Intiṣār* Edited and translated by Albert Nader. Beirut: Les Lettres Orientales, 1957. Al-Ash'arī, Abū'l-Ḥasan, 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl. *Maqālāt al-Islamiyyīn*, 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1987, vol. 1, p. 283, in which Muqātil is said to have asserted that God is a physical body and refers to his having organs and limbs. The *Maqālāt* was written around 291/903–4. See H. Ritter's edition of the *Maqālāt*. Istanbul, 1929–30.
- 116 Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifa Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Tūsī. *Al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 10 vols. Najaf: al-Maṭba'at al-'Ilmiyya, 1957–63 (1376 A.H.), vol. 1, p. 6.
- 117 According to the lexicographical sources, the term is derived from the activities of someone who ventures out into the night in order to gather wood but in doing so inadvertently picks up a snake, which then bites him releasing its venom, killing him. It is the Basran lexicographer of the second/eighth century, Abū 'Amr ibn al-'Alā', who is quoted for this explanation. Ibn Taymiyya used the term when describing the work of al-Tha'labī, whom he accused of promulgating materials he found in the books of *tafsīr*, not paying attention to whether they were authentic, weak, or even fabricated, although he does concede that religiously speaking al-Tha'labī was inherently good. Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū'*, vol. 13, p. 354.
- 118 See the discussion in the introduction to Ibn 'Aṭīyya al-Andalusī's *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, vol. 1, 33–36.
- 119 This is evident in the introductory sections of the standard *tafsīr* literature: for example see Al-Ṭabarī. *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl ayy al-Qur'ān*. vol. 1, pp. 77–93.
- 120 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, vol. 1, p. 85.
- 121 See Ibn 'Aṭīyya al-Andalusī. 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ghālib. *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, vol. 1, pp. 40–41.
- 122 See for example Al-Ṭabarī, who devotes a whole section to dismissing those who use the report to question the validity of *tafsīr*: Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. 1969. *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl ayy al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, pp. 88–91. Abū Ḥayyān *Tafsīr al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, vol. 1, p. 119. And it is frequently implied that differences among the Companions of the Prophet on the subject of *tafsīr* were rarely attested.
- 123 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, vol. 1, p. 74.
- 124 Yet, in the later periods *tafsīr* by its very nature also took on a somewhat exploratory dimension in which exegetes weighed up, contemplated, and determined the import of selected verses across a range of applied contexts. The use of rational models and paradigms in later periods was simply aimed at facilitating intellectual processes. Later scholarship does offer conspectuses of theoretical methods and strategies for the pursuit and practice of *tafsīr*, but such descriptions were often expressed as a desideratum.
- 125 For more on this see: Chapter 6 of the Collection: Saleh, 'Preliminary Remarks on the Historiography of *tafsīr*', pp. 28–9 and the features of Ibn Abī Ḥātim's *Tafsīr*.
- 126 See the discussion below in f/n no. 128.
- 127 Ibn Juzayy, *Kitāb al-tashīl* vol. 1. P. 10 and pp. 12–13.
- 128 The tradition first appears in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad: *al-Musnad*, vol. 3, p. 496 (*ḥadīth* no. 2069); it also features in tradition nos., 2429 (vol. 4); in this *isnād* the first figure in the chain is Mu'ammal, whom traditionists rank as being weak; 2974 (vol. 5), in which the wording differs; and 3024. With regards to its being attested in the introductions to *tafsīr* see for example: al-Ṭabarī;

- Qurṭubī; Ibn ‘Aṭīyya; al-Baghawī, and Ibn Juzayy. The tradition is supported by an *isnād* which includes Wakī, Sufyān (al-Thawrī), Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr and Ibn ‘Abbās, although in the technical literature questions were raised about the status of the *isnād* as one of its transmitters is classed as being weak (‘Abd al-A‘lā al-Tha‘labī). See the editors’ notes on the margins of the *Musnad*. Cf. John Wansbrough on Tirmidhī’s section on *tafsīr bi’l-ra’y* in *Qur’ānic Studies*: pp. 182–3, in which he also evaluates the reference to ‘ilm made by al-Tirmidhī.
- 129 al-Tirmidhī: *al-Jāmi‘ al-mukhtaṣar min al-sunan ‘an rasūl Allāh wa-ma‘rifat al-ṣaḥīḥ al-ma‘lūl wa-mā ‘alayhi al-‘amal*. (*Abwāb tafsīr al-Qur’ān ‘an rasūl Allāh*). In *Al-Kutub al-Sitta: Mawsū‘at al-ḥadīth al-sharīf*. Edited by Ṣāliḥ ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Āl-Shaykh. Riyāḍ: Dār al-Salām, 1999, p. 1948 (ḥadīth nos. 2950 and 2952). The point has been made that it was also called the *Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, although the use of this title was questioned. Cf. Abū Dāwūd’s *Sunan* in the section on *Kitāb al-‘Ilm* (p. 1494, ḥadīth no. 3652), and al-Nasā’ī’s *Sunan: faḍl’il al-Qur’ān*. Also see Mubārakfūrī, Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm. *Tuḥfat al-Aḥwadhī bi-sharḥ Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*. 10 vols. Edited by ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ‘Abd al-Laṭīf, Cairo: Maṭba‘at al-Madanī, 1963.
- 130 One notes that similar statements are used to underline the canonical character of Qur’ānic readings, see: Mustafa Shah. ‘The Early Arabic Grammarians’ Contributions to the Collection and Authentication of Qur’ānic Readings: pp. 72–102. *Passim*. *Idem*. ‘*Qira’āt*’ (*variae lectiones*). *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*. Edited by Kees Versteegh. Vol. IV. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2008, pp. 4–11.
- 131 Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. 1969. *Jāmi‘ al-bayān ‘an ta’wīl ayy al-Qur’ān*, vol. 1, pp. 90–91. See also the *Majmū‘*, vol. 13, p. 332. Ibn Taymiyya states that it was for these reasons that Sufyān al-Thawrī said: If *tafsīr* reaches you from Mujāhid, then it should suffice you’, adding that al-Shāfi‘ī, al-Bukhārī, al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and other scholars, who were authors of *tafsīr* works, all relied on materials from Mujāhid. In Suyūṭī’s *Itqān* the additional point is made regarding the above narration that Mujāhid asked about the object and circumstances of these verses’ revelation. See also Juynboll *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*, p. 430.
- 132 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, vol. 1, p. 78.
- 133 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, vol. 1, pp. 84–89. He even speaks of there being issues with regard to the *isnād* of the tradition.
- 134 See Abū’l-Layth al-Samarqandī. *Baḥr al-‘ulūm*, vol. 3, p. 72. Ibn Juzayy, *Kitāb al-tashīl*, vol. 1. P. 10 and pp. 12–13. check.
- 135 Kristin Zahra Sands. *Ṣūfī Commentaries on the Qur’ān in Classical Islam*: Sands argues that Ibn Taymiyya’s *Muqaddimah* was almost ‘a point by point rebuttal of al-Ghazālī’s arguments for not confining Qur’ānic commentary to the transmitted tradition.’ P. 55. But the sort of arguments articulated by al-Ghazālī with regards to the pursuit of *tafsīr* were ones with which all most classical exegetes would identify, including al-Ṭabarī, who deals with similar objections raised by ‘*man ankara tafsīr al-mufasssīrīn*’ in his introduction. The idea that Ibn Taymiyya was claiming that the Prophet explained the whole Qur’ān as suggested by Sands ties in with his view that knowledge which is requisite to the foundations of faith and practice would have to be explained; however, the suggestion is that neither the Prophet nor the Companions pored over every aspect of the text for had it been necessary they would have done so. Ibn Taymiyya’s concern is the obsessive focus on minutiae which one encounters in the works of the exegetes. Sectarian as well as mystical approaches to *tafsīr* are dealt with in other parts of the *Majmū‘*.

- 136 Al-Ghazālī, Abū Hāmid. *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. 4 Vols. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1987, vol. 1, pp. 288–293; the Prophetic tradition on *ra'y* is mentioned on p. 37 and p. 289. Nicholas Heer. Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī's Esoteric Exegesis of the Koran. *The Heritage of Sufism*. Volume I: Classical Persian Sufism from its Origins to Rūmī (700–1300). Edited by Leonard Lewisohn. London: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications 1993, pp. 234–257 (Chapter 56 of the Collection). Also see Nicholas Heer's chapter on 'The Canons of *Ta'wīl*.' In *Windows on the House of Islam: Muslim Sources on Spirituality and Religious Life*. Edited by John Renard. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 48–54. See also Martin Whittingham. *Al-Ghazālī and the Qur'ān: One Book, Many Meanings*. London: Routledge 2007. Mehmet S. Aydin, 'Al-Ghazālī on Metaphorical Interpretation.' In *Metaphor, Canon and Community: Jewish, Christian and Islamic Approaches*. Edited by R. Bisschops and J. Francis. Bern, P. Lang. 1999. Avital Wohlman. *Al-Ghazālī, Averroes and the Interpretation of the Qur'ān: Common Sense and Philosophy in Islam*. Translated by David Burrell. London; New York, Routledge, 2010. Gwynne, Rosalind Ward. *Logic, Rhetoric and Legal Reasoning in the Qur'ān: God's Arguments*. New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004. See also Al-Ghazālī, Abū Hāmid. *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā. Dār Beirut: Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm, 1990. And the introduction to al-Ghazālī, Abū Hāmid. *Al-Mustaṣfā fī 'ilm al-uṣūl*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1993. Note also his use of exegesis in David Burrell and Daher, N. *Al-Ghazālī: the Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names of God*. A Translation of *al-Maqṣad al-asnā fī sharḥ asmā' Allāh al-ḥusnā*. 6th edition. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2004. Frank Griffel. *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Ebrahim Moosa. *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination*. Chapel Hill. University of North Carolina Press, 2005. Richard Frank. *Al-Ghazālī and the Ash'arite School*. London: Duke University Press, 1994. Abul Muhammad Quasem. *The Recitation and Interpretation of the Qur'ān: al-Ghazālī's Theory*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1979. And Muhammad Abul Quasem. 'Al-Ghazālī's Theory of Qur'ān Exegesis According to One's Personal Opinion.' In International Congress for the Study of the Qur'ān, Australian National University, Canberra, 8–13 May, 1981. Canberra: Australian National University, pp. 69–91 (Chapter 23 in this Collection). Michael Marmura. 'Ghazālī and Ash'arism Revisited.' *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* (2002:12), pp. 91–110. Timothy Gianotti. *Al-Ghazālī's Unspeakable Doctrine of the Soul: Unveiling the Esoteric Psychology and Eschatology of the Iḥyā'*. Leiden: Brill, 2001. Nicholas Heer. 'Moral Deliberation in al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*.' In *Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism*. Edited by Parviz Morewedge. Delmar. New York: Caravan Books, 1981. Pp. 163–176.
- 137 Al-Ghazālī. *Iḥyā'*, vol. 1, pp. 291.
- 138 Abū Ḥayyān, *Tafsīr al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, vol. 1, p. 104.
- 139 Al-Qurtubī, *al-Jāmi' fī aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, pp. 26.
- 140 For more on this see Ibn Qutayba, Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh ibn Muslim. *Ta'wīl mukhtalif al-ḥadīth*. Al-Riyāḍ: Dār Ibn al-Qayyim; Dār 'Affān: al-Riyāḍh, 2009. In the introduction to this work the point is made that the historian al-Mas'ūdī regularly refers to *isrā'īlīyāt*, al-Mas'ūdī, Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn. *Murūj al-Dhahab wa-ma'ādin al-jawhar*. 4 vols. Edited by Qāsim al-Rifā'ī. Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 1989. Sabine Schmidtke. 'The Muslim Reception of Biblical Materials: Ibn Qutayba and his *Alām al-nubuwwa*.' *Islam and Muslim-Christian Relationship* (2011:22.3.1), pp. 249–274. Jane McAuliffe. 'The Qur'ānic Context of Muslim Biblical Scholarship.' *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* (1996:7), pp. 141–158. Jacob Lassner. 'The Covenant of the Prophets: Muslim Texts, Jewish Subtexts.'

- AJS Review* (1990:15.2), pp. 207–238. Michael E. Pregill. ‘The Hebrew Bible and the Qur’ān: The Problem of the Jewish “Influence” on Islam.’ *Religion Compass* (2007.1): 10.1111/j.1749-8171.2007.00044.x. J. C. Reeves. *Bible and Qur’ān: Essays in Scriptural Intertextuality*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2004. Gabriel Said Reynolds, *The Qur’ān and its Biblical Subtext*. London: Routledge, 2010. (discussed below). Uri Rubin. *Between Bible and Qur’ān: The Children of Israel and the Islamic Self-Image*. Princeton, Darwin Press 1999. Walid A. Saleh. ‘A Fifteenth-century Muslim Hebraist: al-Biqā’ī and his Defense of Using the Bible to Interpret the Qur’ān.’ *Speculum: a Journal of Medieval Studies* (2008:83.3), pp. 629–654 (Chapter 30 of the Collection). See Muḥammad al-Dhahabī’s survey *al-mufasssirūn*: and Firestone Reuven. ‘Comparative Studies in Bible and Qur’ān: a Fresh Look at Genesis 22 in light of Sura 37.’ In *Judaism and Islam: boundaries, communication and interaction. Essays in honor of William M. Brinner*. Edited by B. H. Hary, J. L. Hayes, F. Astren. Leiden: Brill, 2000, pp. 169–184. Reuven Firestone. ‘Abraham’s Son as the Intended Sacrifice (*al-dhabīh*, Qur’ān 37:99–113): Issues in Qur’ānic Exegesis.’ *Journal of Semitic Studies* (1989:34), pp. 95–131. *Idem*. *Journeys in the Holy Lands: The Evolution of the Abraham-Ishmael Legends in Islamic Exegesis*. Albany: State University of New York Press 1990. Marilyn Waldman. ‘New Approaches to “Biblical” Materials in the Qur’ān.’ In *Papers Presented at the Institute of Islamic-Judaic Studies*. Edited by W. M. Brinner and S. D. Ricks. Atlanta: University of Denver, 1986, pp. 47–63. Andrew Rippin. ‘Interpreting the Bible Through the Qur’ān.’ In *Approaches to the Qur’ān*. London: Routledge, 1993. Pp. 249–59. And Jane McAuliffe. ‘The Qur’ānic Context of Muslim Biblical Scholarship.’ *Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations* (1996:7.2), pp. 141–158. McIntosh Thackston Wheeler. *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisā’i*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978. Frances M Young. *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Sebastian Gunther. ‘O People of the Scripture! Come to a Word Common to You and Us (Q. 3:64): The Ten Commandments and the Qur’ān.’ *Journal of Qur’ānic Studies* (2007:9.1), pp. 28–58; it has even been suggested that the term *isrā’īlīyāt* denoted a genre of writing. Clifford Bosworth. ‘The Qur’ānic Prophet Shu’aib and Ibn Taymiyya’s Epistle Concerning Him.’ *Le Muséon* (1974:87), pp. 424–40. Heribert Busse. ‘Jerusalem in the Story of Muḥammad’s Night Journey and Ascension’. *Journal of Studies in Arabic and Islam* (1991:14), pp. 1–40. And *Idem* ‘The Destruction of the Temple and its Reconstruction in the Light of Muslim Exegesis of Sura 17:2–8.’ *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (1996:20), pp. 1–17. Joan Comay. *Who’s Who in the Old Testament Together with the Apocrypha*. London and Oxon, Routledge, 2002.
- 141 Gautier Juynboll: *Encyclopaedia*, pp. xxiv propounds the view that his methodology showed that classical Muslim terminology and methods of authentication are not only ‘unworkable’, but they ‘constitute a fossilised convention.’ For classical definitions see Ibn Ḥajar *Nuzhat*, p. 45. And al-Suyūṭī. *Tadrib*, vol. 1, p. 153 ff. (al-Suyūṭī, *Tadrib*, p. 179 f). Cf. Zayn al-Dīn al-‘Irāqī, *Faṭḥ al-mughīth*, pp. 50 f.
- 142 Al-Tirmidhī, *Kitāb al-‘Ilm* (tradition number 2669). In *Al-Kutub al-Sitta: Mawsū‘at al-ḥadīth al-sharīf*. Edited by Ṣāliḥ ibn ‘Abd al-Azīz Āl-Shaykh. Riyāḍ: Dār al-Salām, 1999, pp. 1920–21. The fact that there were issues concerning *tahrīf* (the claim that Biblical sources had been corrupted) further complicated matters. See also Hava Lazarus-Yafah. *Intertwined Worlds: Medieval Islam and Bible Criticism* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992, in which Muslim scholars’ awareness of the Bible is discussed; and Camila Adang.

Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible: from Ibn Rabbān to Ibn Ḥazm. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996.

- 143 al-Bukhārī, *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* (tradition number 3461). In *Al-Kutub al-Sitta: Mawsū'at al-ḥadīth al-sharīf*. Edited by Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz Āl-Shaykh. Riyāḍ: Dār al-Salām, 1999, pp. 629–30 cf. Ibn Ḥajar. *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 13, pp. 632–4. Cf. Jomier Jacques. *The Bible and the Qur'ān*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002. Ismail Albayrak. 'Isrā'īliyyāt and Classical Exegetes Comments on the Calf with a Hollow Sound Q. 20: 83–98/7: 147–155 with Special Reference to Ibn 'Aṭīyya.' *Journal of Semitic Studies* (2002:47.1), pp. 39–65. J. M. Kister. 'ḥaddithu 'an banī isra'īla wa-la ḥaraja: a Study of an Early Tradition.' *Israel Oriental Studies*, 1972:2 pp. 215–239. J. M. Kister, *Society and Religion from Jahiliyya to Islam*. Aldershot: Variorum, 1990. Harry Norris. 'Qīṣaṣ elements in the Qur'ān.' in A. F. L., Beeston, Johnstone, T. M., Serjeant, R. B., Smith G. R., *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad period*, Cambridge History of Arabic Literature. Cambridge: University Press, 1983. pp. 246–59. Steven M. Wasserstrom, 'Jewish Pseudepigrapha and Qīṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'.' In *Judaism and Islam: Boundaries, Communication and Interaction. Essays in honour of William M. Brinner*, pp. 237–56. It was Jacob Lassner who labelled the *isrā'īliyyāt* as 'Jewish memorabilia' see *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba: Boundaries of Gender and Culture in Postbiblical Judaism and Medieval Islam*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1994, p. 121. Cf. Cornelia Schöck. *Adam im Islam; Ein Beitrag zur Ideengeschichte der Sunna*. Berlin. 1993.
- 144 al-Bukhārī, *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* (tradition number 7542). In *al-Kutub al-Sitta*: pp. 629–30.
- 145 The figure who features as the source for these reports is famed for his advocating the writing down of traditions: 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ. He is said to have been the possessor of a so-called *al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sādiqa*, a parchment on which he kept a record of traditions he collated during the lifetime of the Prophet; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī reports that it was 'Abd Allāh who sought the permission of the Prophet to 'write down knowledge' (Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī's *Taqyīd al-'ilm*. Edited by Yūsuf al-'Ishsh. 2nd edi., n.p: 1974, Pp. 68 and 74); and consequently 'Abd Allāh's name is often synonymously associated with the codification movement; indeed, in one of the isolated Prophetic traditions in which Wahb ibn Munabbih features as a narrator, the Companion Abū Hurayra is reported to have pronounced that no one was more prolific than himself when it came to the promulgation of Prophetic traditions with the exception of 'Abd Allāh, adding he was able to write while Abū Hurayra was not (op. cit. 79.) cf. al-Tirmidhī, *Kitāb al-'Ilm* (tradition number 2669). In *Al-Kutub al-Sitta: Mawsū'at al-ḥadīth al-sharīf*. 1999, pp. 1920–21.
- 146 Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū'*, vol. 13, pp. Again it is implied that they were used for the purposes of illustration and not for determining religious convictions.
- 147 Ibn Kathīr, Abū'l-Fidā' Ismā'īl. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*. 6 vols. Edited by Sāmī ibn Muḥammad Salāma. Beirut: Dār Ṭayba Li'l-Nashr, 1999. Ibn Kathīr, Abū'l-Fidā' Ismā'īl. *al-Bidāya wa'l-nihāya*. 8 Vols (2 parts). Edited by A. Muḥim, A. 'Aṭwī, F. Sayyid, M. Nāṣir al-Dīn, A. 'Abd al-Sātir. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1986. Ibn Kathīr, Abū'l-Fidā' Ismā'īl. *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Abū Ishāq al-Huwīnī. Cairo: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyya, 1416 A.H.
- 148 Roberto Tottoli. 'Origin and Use of the Term *Isrā'īliyyāt* in Muslim Literature: *Arabica* (1999:46), pp. 193–210. *Idem*. *Biblical Prophets in the Qur'ān and Muslim Literature*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2002. Haim Schwarzbbaum. *Biblical and Extra-Biblical Legends in Islamic Folk Literature*. Walldorf, Germany: Verlag für Orientkunde Dr. H. Vorndran, 1982. Walid A. Saleh. *In Defense of the Bible*.

- A Critical Edition and an Introduction to al-Biqā'ī's Bible Treatise*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2008. Roberta Sterman Sabbath (ed.). *Sacred Tropes: Tanakh, New Testament, and Qur'ān as Literature and Culture*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009.
- 149 Ibn Qutayba, Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh ibn Muslim. *al-Ma'ārif*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1987. See the introductory sections of this work and the range of materials it uses. *Idem*. *Uyūn al-Akhbār* 2 vols. (4 parts). Cairo: Dār Maṭba'at al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1925. See Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī, Aḥmad ibn 'Abd Allāh. *Hilyat al-awliyā' wa-ṭabaqāt al-aṣfiyā'*. 10 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1988, vol. 2, pp. 23–81, for a idea of the range of materials associated with Wahb. See M. J. Kister. 'Legends in *tafsīr* and *ḥadīth* Literature: the Creation of Adam and Related Stories.' In *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 82–114. Tilman Nagel. *Die Qiṣas al-anbiyā': Ein Beitrag zur Arabischen Literaturgeschichte*. Bonn, 1967, pp. 113–18 for his discussion of Iṣḥāq ibn Bishr (d. 206/821), the author of *Mubtada' al-dunyā wa-qiṣas al-anbiyā'*. Cf. Kister, 'Legends', p. 83. Also see the discussion in Roberto Tottoli. *Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*, p. 467–480.
- 150 Al-Zajjāj, Ma'ānī *al-Qur'ān wa-i'rābuhu*, vol. 4, pp. 328–9. For more on the encounter see the work by Marianna Klar. 'And We Cast Upon his Throne a Mere Body: A Historiographical Reading of Q.38:34. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* (2004:6.1), pp. 103–26. Marianna Klar. *Interpreting al-Tha'labī's Tales of the Prophet. Temptation, Responsibility and Loss*. London: Routledge, 2009.
- 151 See also Abū'l-Layth al-Samarqandī. *Baḥr al-ulūm*, vol. 3, p. 133.
- 152 Al-Zamakhsharī, Abū'l-Qāsim Jār Allāh Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar. *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 3, pp. 365–366. Al-Zamakhsharī does side with an explanation of the affair in which he suggests that David had simply requested that Uriah relinquish his wife in order that he could marry her. Note the general position taken by al-Rāzī in his *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* and discussed by Muḥsin 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. *Al-Rāzī: Mufasssirān*. Muḥsin 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. Baghdad: Dār al-Ḥuriyya, 1974, pp. 146–151. Al-Rāzī was especially sceptical of the value of the *isrā'iliyyāt*.
- 153 'Izz al-Dīn, 'Abd al-Razzāq ibn Rizq Allāh al-Ras'ānī. *Rumūz al-kunūz fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-'azīz*. 9 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Dahaysh. Mecca: Maktabat al-Asadī. 2008, vol. 6, pp. 464–472. Cf. the treatment by Ibn 'Ādil al-Dimashqī, Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar ibn 'Alī. *Al-Lubāb fī 'ulūm al-kitāb*. 20 Vols. Edited by 'Ādil Aḥmad, 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwad, Muḥammad Ḥasan, Muḥammad Ḥarb. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1998.
- 154 Ibn Juzayy, *Kitāb al-tashīl* vol. 1. Pp. 10 and pp. 12–13.
- 155 al-Biqā'ī, Burhān al-Dīn Abū'l-Ḥasan. *Naẓm al-Durar fī tanāsib al-ayyāt wa'l-suwar*. 22 vols. Edited by Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī, n.d.
- 156 See Ibn Hibbān, Muḥammad al-Bustī, *Kitāb al-Majrūḥīn wa'l-qu'afā' wa'l-matrūkīn*. 3 vols. Edited by Maḥmūd Ibrāhīm Zāyid. Aleppo: Dār al-Wa'ī, A.H. 1398, vol. 3, pp. 14–15. See also al-Dāraqutnī, 'Alī ibn 'Umar. *Kitāb al-qu'afā' wa'l-matrūkīn*. Edited by Ṣubḥī al-Sāmarrā'ī. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1975. Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, vol. 1, p. 66. Al-Ṭabarī mentions that reports on the origin of the language of the Qur'ān and the reference to its being revealed in seven modes, which were narrated on Ibn 'Abbās' authority, were not ones suitable for *iḥtijāj* (purposes of citation) due to their emanating from al-Kalbī and Qatāda, whom, he says, did not meet Ibn 'Abbās.
- 157 The biographical data suggest that Muqātil himself gained quite a reputation as a storyteller in that he used to narrate tales in the mosque at Merv.
- 158 Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mukhtalif al-ḥadīth*. Al-Riyāḍ: Dār Ibn al-Qayyim; Dār 'Affān: 2009, p. 526 f. *Idem*. *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif*, especially the introductory parts.

- 159 Ibn al-Jawzī's *Kitāb al-quṣṣāṣ wa'l-mudhakkirīn*. Including a Critical Edition, Annotated translation and Introduction by Merlin Swartz. Beirut: Dar El-Machreq Éditeurs, 1971, pp. 95–103. See Also the Arabic edition: Ibn al-Jawzī, 'Abd al-Rahmān. *Kitāb al-Quṣṣāṣ wa'l-mudhakkirīn*. Edited by Muḥammad Luṭfī al-Ṣabbāgh. Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988.
- 160 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, vol. 18, pp. 104–5. Thus for example, his treatment of the account of Dhū'l-Qarnayn relies not only on *isrā'īlīyāt*, but he is also citing traditions whose authenticity is traditionally questioned. When discussing the identity of Dhū'l-Qarnayn, he cites a chain of authority in which the famous historian Muḥammad ibn Ishāq introduces, by way of an unnamed figure, Wabḥ ibn Munabbih, of whom he says: 'he possessed knowledge of the ancient past' and that he used to assert that Dhū'l-Qarnayn was from the '*ahl al-Rūm*' and that his name was Alexander. See *Al-Mu'jam al-ṣaghūr li'ruwāt al-Imām Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī*. 2 vols. Edited by Akram al-Fālūjī al-Atharī. Ammān: Dār al-Atharīyya; Dār Ibn 'Affān. 1425 A.H.
- 161 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, vol. 18, pp. 104–5. This was technically referred to as *tadlīs*, namely concealing the identity of a narrator for which Ibn Ishāq was regularly criticised. For a biography of Wabḥ see al-Dhahabī, al-*Siyar a'lām*, vol. 4, pp. 545–547. It is pointed out that he has only a single tradition in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections on the subject of 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ's ability to write. (no. 112 in al-Bukhārī)
- 162 Ibn Kathīr, vol. 5, p. 189. It is Ibn Kathīr who actually criticizes al-Ṭabarī as well as the *ḥadīth* critic Ibn Abī Ḥātim for including the reports identifying Dhū'l-Qarnayn with Alexander the Great; and this was something Ibn Taymiyya had discussed. See also Jān Pauliny. 'Some Remarks on the *Qisās al-anbiyā'* Works in Arabic Literature.' In *The Qur'ān: Formative Interpretation*, pp. 313–26. Translated from the German: 'Einige Bemerkungen zu den Werken 'Qisās al-Anbiyā' in der arabischen Literatur.' *Graecolatina et Orientalia* 1. Bratislava: Comenius University of Bratislava. 1969, pp. 111–23.
- 163 Of course, technically speaking the concept of '*ādāla*', namely the probity and integrity of the class of Companions, meant that it was inconceivable that esteemed individuals would propagate materials deemed inauthentic and religiously suspect, although their names are invoked in the processes of ascription.
- 164 Included among the corpora of tradition were the direct views expressed by the Prophet, which included pronouncements and judgements as well as words of exhortation; discussions of his views; opinions and words of exhortation attributed to the Prophet; accounts of his sanctions and deeds; reports eulogizing his qualities and characteristics; and anecdotes recounting aspects of historical events in his lifetime. A substantial number of the Prophetic reports pertain to the lives of the Companions, whose own dicta were important in the synthesis of the notion of the concept of *Ṣunna*.
- 165 Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū'l-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn. *Zād al-masīr fī 'ilm al-tafsīr*. 8 vols. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1987.
- 166 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-masīr*, vol. 1, p. 1, and p. 4.
- 167 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-masīr*, vol. 1, p. 45. See the equating of *istiḥwā'* with the verb '*amada ilā*' (to turn's one attention or focus towards something) which suggests a figurative gloss on the verse. The traditionalist position was that *istiḥwā'* should be equated with '*alā*'. For views on the radical theology of Ibn al-Jawzī in the eyes of his fellow Ḥanbalites see Ibn Rajab's *Kitāb al-dhayl 'alā ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābila*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Hāmid al-Fiqhī. Cairo: Dār Ihya' al-Kutub al-Arabiyya, n.d. vol. 1, pp. 399–432. One point which concerned his

- contemporaries and later scholars was the frequency with which errors occur in some of his writings. It was attributed to the fact that he authored so many texts, often simultaneously, without stopping to reflect (review) upon a completed work; and he was said to rush into authoring texts on subjects with which he was not thoroughly acquainted. Ibn Rajab's *Kitāb al-dhayl*, vol. 1, p. 414. He was accused of an inclination to *ta'wīl*, which in a theological context, meant explaining away the literal language of scripture when faced with scriptural verses whose anthropomorphic thrust was apparent, including the use of metaphor to obviate imagery predicated of the Almighty and this is something that he does throughout the *tafsīr*. Loc. cit. the science of *ḥadīth* was often viewed as his forte. See Ibn Rajab, vol. 1, pp. 414–20 for lists of his works.
- 168 Ibn 'Aṭīyya al-Andalusī. 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ghālib. *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, vol. 1, pp. 40–41. Ismail Albayrak. 'The Qur'ānic Narratives of the Golden Calf Episode.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2001:3.1) pp. 47–69.
- 169 Al-Qurṭubī, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Anṣārī. *al-Jāmi' lī aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, pp. 1–16.
- 170 See the introductions to: al-Baghawī. *Ma'ālim al-tanzīl*, vol. 1, pp. 1–4. 'Alī ibn Muḥammad. *Lubāb al-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī al-tanzīl*. Baghdad: al-Muthannā, 1975; this is a reproduction of Cairo edi. of 1328 A.H and has al-Nasafī's work on the margins. Al-Nasafī, Abū'l-Barakāt, 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad. *Madārik al-tanzīl wa-ḥaqā'iq al-ta'wīl (Tafsīr al-Nasafī)*. 3 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1998. He states that he had written the work at the behest of an individual whom it was inappropriate to decline. The issue of orthodoxy is discussed in Kevin Reinhart, 'Sunni Sectarianism' In *Living Islamic History: Studies in Honour of Professor Carole Hillenbrand*. Edited by Yasir Suleiman. Edinburgh : Edinburgh University Press, 2010, pp. 209–25. Ibn Taymiyya described al-Baghawī's *tafsīr* as being an abridged version of al-Tha'labī's work. *Majmū'*, vol. 13, p. 386.
- 171 Al-Tha'labī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *Al-Jawāhir al-ḥisān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 5 Vols. Edited by 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd, 'Alī Mu'awwad, 'Abd al-Fattāh. Beirut: Iḥyā' al-Turath al-'Arabī; Mu'assasat al-Ta'rīkh al-'Arabī, 1997, vol. 1, pp. 117–118.
- 172 It was also referred to as *al-Jāmi' al-kabīr*. See the list of works attributed to him by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qifṭī. *Inbāh al-ruwāt 'alā anbāh al-nuḥāt*. vol. 2, pp. 295–296. Michael Carter. 'Linguistic Science and Orthodoxy in Conflict: the Case of al-Rummānī.' *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften* 1: 212–32. 1984. The works attributed to al-Rummānī include: *Kitāb gharīb al-Qur'ān*; *Kitāb al-jāmi' fī 'ilm al-Qur'ān*; *Kitāb al-mutashābih fī 'ilm al-Qur'ān*; and *al-Mukhtaṣar fī 'ilm al-suwar al-qīṣār*. Jamāl al-Dīn Abū'l-Maḥāsīn, Yūsuf ibn Taghribirdī. *Al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa'l-Qāhira*. 16 vols. Edited and introduced by Muḥammad Ḥasan Shams al-Dīn. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, n.d. For Rummānī see *Al-Nujūm al-zāhira* vol. 4, p. 170. The point is made that al-Zamakhsharī based his work on that of al-Rummānī. Cf. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī. See also *Tafsīr al-Rummānī Manuscripts arabes de la BNF: Arabe 6523*.
- 173 Al-Zamakhsharī, Abū'l-Qāsim Jār Allāh Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar. *Al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl wa-'uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta'wīl*, printed with Ibn Munayyir (d. 683/1284)'s *Kitāb al-Inṣāf fīmā taḍammanuhu al-Kashshāf min 'itizāl*. 4 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1977. Andrew Lane. *A Traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'ān Commentary: the Kashshāf of Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144)* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2006. Muṣṭafā Juwayni, *Minhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān wa-bayān i'jāzihī*. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1984. Ṣāliḥ ibn Gharam Allāh. *Al-Masā'il al-'itizāliyya fī tafsīr al-Kashshāf li'-Zamakhsharī fī ḍaw' ma warada fī kitāb al-intiṣāf li-Ibn Munayyir*. Ḥā'il: Dār al-Andalus, 1998. See also Sabine Schmidtke.

- A Mu'tazilite Creed of az-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) (Al-Minhāj fi uṣūl al-dīn)*
 Edited and Translated. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1997. Michael Schub. Linguistic Topics in al-Zamakhsharī's Commentary on the Qur'ān. PhD Thesis. University of California, 1977. Ibrahim Lutpi. 'al-Zamakhsharī: His Life and Works.' *Islamic Studies* (1980:19), pp. 95–110. *Idem*, 'The Concept of *Iḥbāt* and *Takfīr* According to az-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḏāwī.' *Die Welt des Orient* (1980:11), pp. 117–21. For the Qur'ān based works of al-Rummānī see Māzin Mubārak, *Al-Rummānī al-Nahwī fī daw' sharḥihi li-kitāb Sībawayhi*. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1974. Cf. pp. 93–99. It is suggested that al-Rummānī was the author a large *tafsīr* which al-Zamakhsharī emulated and added to. Michael Schub. 'Three Syntactic Discussions in al-Zamakhsharī's Commentary.' *Al-Andalus* (1977:42), pp. 465–69. Mazher Siddiqi, 'Some Aspects of the Mu'tazalī Interpretation of the Qur'ān.' *Islamic Studies* (1963:2), pp. 95–120.
- 174 Al-Zamakhsharī, Abū'l-Qāsim Jār Allāh Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar. *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 1, pp. 15–16; and p. 18. Ibn Munayyir explains that *tafsīr* is a science concerned with exploring the nature and circumstance of the glorious speech of God with regards to the significance of its import: it is divided into exegesis which is informed only by virtue of received convention such as *ashbāb al-nuzūl* and *qīṣaṣ* all being determined by transmitted dicta; and *ta'wīl*, which one is able to perceive by reference to the rules of grammar and is therefore based on *dirāya* (application of the seat of intellect). He adds that transmitted statements must be adhered to with regards to the former.
- 175 Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī, Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf. *Tafsīr al-Bahr al-muḥīṭ*. 7 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1993. Edited by 'Adīl Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd and al-Shaykh 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwaḍ. 1993, vol. 1, pp. 99–100. He also explains that anyone with a desire and yearning for knowledge of *tafsīr* who wants to achieve real distinction and excellence therein should make the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi the subject of his thoughtful attention.
- 176 Al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf. *al-Durr al-maṣūn fī 'ulūm al-kitāb al-maknūn*. 7 vols. Edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Kharrāṭ. Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1986–1991. *Idem*. 'Umdat al-ḥuffāz fī tafsīr ashraf al-alfāz. Edited by Mehmud Muhammed Esseyid Eddügem Istanbul: Sayyid Neşriyat, 1987.
- 177 Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb, al-Firūzābādī. *Baṣā'ir dhaw'l-tamyīz fī laṭā'if al-kitāb al-'āzīz*. Edited by Muḥammad 'Alī al-Najjār. Cairo: Lajnat Ihya' al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1964.
- 178 The actual structure of the initial parts of the text has concerned some writers and much has been of the role of al-Rāzī's student in arranging parts of it. Al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn, Muḥammad ibn 'Umar. *Mafāṭīḥ al-Ghayb*, 16 vols., 32 parts. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1981–83. For a study of his achievements as an exegete see Muḥsin 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. *Al-Rāzī: Mufasssārān*. Muḥsin 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. Baghdad: Dār al-Huriyya, 1974. Michel Lagarde. *Index du Grand Commentaire de Fahr al-Dīn al-Rāzī*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996. Also see Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Zarkān. *Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī wa-arā'uhu al-kalāmiyya wa'l-falsafīyya*. Dimashq: Dār al-Fikr, 1963. Kees Versteegh. 'The Linguistic Introduction to Rāzī's *Tafsīr*', *Studies on Near East Languages and Literatures. Memorial Volume Karel Patracek*. Edited by Petr Vavrousek and Petr Zemanek. Prague: Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, BCS Printing, 1996. pp. 589–603. A. H. Johns. 'Solomon and the Queen of Sheba: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Treatment of the Qur'ānic Telling of the Story.' *Abr Nahrain* (1986:24), pp. 58–82. Cf. Mir Mustansir. 'The Queen of Sheba's Conversion in Q.27:44: a Problem Examined.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2007:9.2), pp. 43–56. For work on al-Rāzī's philosophy see Ayman Shihadeh. 'From al-Ghazālī to al-Rāzī: 6th/12th Century Developments

- in Muslim Philosophical Theology.' *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* (2005:15.1), pp. 141–79. Also see his *Teleological Ethics of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2006. Fathalla Kholeif. *A Study on Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and His Controversies in Transoxiana*. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1966. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, 'Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī on *ayat al-jizyah* and *ayat al-sayf*.' *Conversion and Continuity: Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands, Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries*. Edited by M. Gervers & Ramzi Jibran Bikhazi (Papers in Mediaeval Studies, 9) Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990, pp. 104–119. For his theological and philosophical legacy see Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī Muḥammad ibn 'Umar. *Al-Maṭālib al-'ālīya min al-'ilm al-ilāhī*. 9 vols. Edited by Aḥmad Ḥijāzī al-Saqqā. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1987. Al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Umar. *Al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya fī 'ilm al-ilāhiyyāt wa'l-taḥqīqiyyāt*. Edited by Muḥammad al-Baghdādī, 2 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1990. For a medieval account of his life see Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn 'Alī. *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfi'iyya al-kubrā*. 10 vols. Edited by Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Tanāhī and 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥilwī. Cairo: 'Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1964–76, vol. 8, pp. 81–93. The issue of whether the work was completed by al-Rāzī and the question of its format and arrangement are discussed at length by Muḥsin 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. See also Tariq Jaffer: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210): Philosopher and Theologian as Exegete. PhD dissertation, Yale 2005.
- 179 Roger Arnaldez. 'L'oeuvre de Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī commentateur du Coran et philosophe.' *Cahiers du Civilization médiévale, Xme-XIIe siècles* 1960. 3, pp. 307–23. Roger Arnaldez. 'Trouvailles philosophiques dans le commentaire coranique de Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.' *Etudes Orientales* (1989:4), pp. 17–26. Roger Arnaldez. *Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: commentateur du Coran et philosophe*. Paris: J. Vrin. 2002. *Idem*. 'Qui a commenté L'ensemble des sourates al-'ankabūt à Yasīn (29–36) dans 'le tafsīr al-kabīr' de l'imām Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī?' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (1980:11), pp. 467–485. Ceylan, Yasin. *Theology and Tafsīr in the Major Works of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1996. Jacques Jomier, 'The Qur'ānic Commentary of Imām Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: Its Sources and Its Originality'. International Congress for the Study of the Qur'ān, Australian National University, Canberra, 8–13 May, 1981. Canberra: Australian National University, pp. 93–111. Jacques Jomier. 'L'index du Grand commentaire de Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. *Institut Dominicain d'Etudes. Orientales du Caire: Melanges (MIDEO)*, (2000:24), pp. 423–434. See also Tony Street. 'Concerning the Life and Works of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.' In *Islam: Essays on Scripture, Thought and Society. A Festschrift in Honour of Antony H. Johns*. Edited by Peter G. Riddell and Tony Street. Leiden: E.J. Brill, pp. 135–46. 1997. Binyamin. Abrahamov 'Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī on the Knowability of God's Essence and Attributes.' *Arabica* (2002:49.2), pp. 204–230.
- 180 al-Naysābūrī, al-Hasan ibn Muḥammad. *Tafsīr ghar'ib al-Qur'ān wa-raghā'ib al-Furqān*. Edited by Zakariyyā 'Umayrāt. 5 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1996, vol. 2, pp. 5–6.
- 181 While the early movement was polarised around the doctrine that leadership of the community was the exclusive right of the house of the Prophet, discussions about the infallibility of the Imām and the notion of the occultation of the twelfth Imām were developed into key doctrines: see Heinz Hālm. *Shiism*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004, McDermott, Martin. *The Theology of al-Shaykh al-Mufīd*. Beirut: 1978. John Donohue, *The Buwayhid Dynasty in Iraq 334H./945 to 403H./1012: Shaping Institutions for the Future*. Leiden; Boston: E.J. Brill, 2003.

- 182 For more on this see: Meir Bar-Asher. *Scripture and Exegesis in Early Imāmī Shī'ism*, pp. 16–18; and p. 82. Also see Tamima Bayhom-Daou. 'The Imām's Knowledge and the Qur'ān according to al-Faḍl b. Shādhān al-Nisābūrī (d. 260 A.H. / 874 A.D.)' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (2001:64.2), pp. 188–207. Maher Jarrar. 'Some Aspects of Imāmī Influence on Early Zaydite Theology.' In R. Brunner, Gronke, Laut, Rebstock. *Islamstudien ohne Ende. Festschrift für Werner Ende*. Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2002, pp. 201–23.
- 183 Detailed summaries of these works are provided in Meir Bar-Asher. *Scripture and Exegesis in Early Imāmī Shī'ism*, pp. 28–68. See Meir Bar-Asher. *Scripture and Exegesis in Early Imāmī Shī'ism*, who points that Nöldeke devoted only four pages of his work to Shī'ite *tafsīr*, p. 27. Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-'Askarī. *Tafsīr al-'Askarī*, Edited by al-Sayyid 'Alī 'Ashūr. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Ta'rīkh al-'Arabī, 2001. Muḥammad al-Dhahabī devotes a whole section to Shī'ite *tafsīr* literature. Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Dhahabī. *Al-Tafsīr wa'l-mufasssīrūn*, vol. 2, pp. 46–249. Al-'Askarī's text is discussed on pp. 85–106. Al-Dhahabī questions the ascription of the text to 'Askarī, claiming that the excessive anti-Sunnī rhetoric which appears in this text is not replicated in the biographical materials describing al-'Askarī, p. 106.
- 184 Meir Bar-Asher. 'The Qur'ān Commentary Ascribed to Imām Ḥasan al-'Askarī.' *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (2000:24), pp. 358–379, p. 359. And p. 379. (Chapter 47 of the Collection)
- 185 See Meir Bar-Asher. *Scripture and Exegesis in Early Imāmī Shī'ism*, where he draws attention to the issue of the present compositional status of the texts (pp. 35–36) Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī. *Tafsīr al-Qummī*. 2 vols. Edited by al-Sayyid Ṭayyib al-Musawī al-Jazā'irī. Najaf: Maṭba'at Najaf, 1386 A. H. Muḥammad Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 244–46, for a list of al-Ayyāshī's works.
- 186 Meir Bar-Asher argues that there are four characteristics of pre-Buwayhid Imāmī exegesis: exegesis by *ḥadīth*; a selective concern with the text of the Qur'ān; scant interest in the theology and in certain issues bearing on the institution of the *imāma*; an extreme anti-Sunnī tendency and a hostile attitude to the Companions of the Prophet (p. 73).
- 187 Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifa Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī. *Al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 5 vols. Najaf: al-Maṭba'at al-'Ilmiyya, 1957 (1376 A.H.), vol. 1, pp. 1–2.
- 188 Key doctrinal differences with Sunnītes are regularly dealt with in the *tafsīr*.
- 189 The recent publication of a critical edition of a third/ninth century text on the subject of *variae lectiones* attributed to the Shī'ī author Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Sayyārī provides an indication of the somewhat opaque history of the construct of *taḥrīf*. *Revelation and Falsification: the Kitāb al-qirā'āt* of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Sayyārī Critical Edition with an Introduction and notes by Etan Kohlberg and Mohammed Ali Amir-Moezzi. E.J. Brill, Leiden 2009. Although clearly subscribing to the doctrine of falsification both in the introduction to the work and in the main text, it is noticeable that instances of alleged *taḥrīf* are restricted to selected verses within specified chapters of the Qur'ān. These tend to be instances in which lexical substitution, vocalic and consonantal variants, and textual interpolation are highlighted in ways which fortify ideological and theological motifs of Shī'ism, although it is within the textual boundaries of the traditionally compiled 'Uthmānic codex that this is constellated. The introduction was originally published under the title: 'Revelation et Falsification: introduction à l'édition du *kitāb al-qirā'āt* d'al-Sayyārī.' *Journal Asiatique* (2005:293), pp. 663–722. Meir Bar-Asher. *Scripture and Exegesis in Early Imāmī Shī'ism*.

- Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1999, p. 16. Cf. Liyakat Takim. 'The Ten Commandments and the Tablets in Shī'ī and Sunnī *Tafsīr* Literature: A Comparative Perspective' *Muslim World* (2011:101), pp. 94–109. Cf. Goldziher, *Richtungen*, pp. 270–89.
- 190 It is worth looking at an overall view of the debates in Etan Kohlberg. 'Some Notes on the Imāmīte Attitude to the Qur'ān.' In *Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition*. Edited by Samuel M. Stern, Albert Hourani and Vivian Brown. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1972, pp. 209–24. On the subject of *lectiones* see Bar-Meir Asher. 'Variant Readings and Additions of the Imami Shī'ite to the Qur'ān.' *Israel Oriental Studies* (1993:13), pp. 39–74. Etan Kohlberg. *Belief and Law in Imāmī Shī'ism*. Aldershot: Variorum; Brookfield, 1991. Significantly, al-Sayyārī's own reputation and standing are vigorously denounced in the classical Shī'ite biographical literature; materials he transmitted were treated with open suspicion and shunned within mainstream Shī'ism. This might also explain the rather obscure history of the manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Qirā'āt*: the actual version of al-Sayyārī's text appears in a manuscript dated to 1076/1666. Although, it is mentioned that it was collated from an exemplar which dates to 453/1061 (see pp. 46–50). For more on this see Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi. *Le Guide divin dans le shī'isme originel: aux sources de l'ésotérisme en Islam*. Lagrasse: Verdier, 1992. *The Divine Guide in Early Shī'ism: The Sources of Esotericism in Islam*. Translated by David Streight. Albany, State University of New York Press, 1994. In summary Moezzi takes the view that in the Buwayhid period 'an original esoteric suprarational tradition' which upheld the doctrine of *tahṛīf* was marginalised as scholars were either 'constrained' or advocated 'a rapprochement' with Sunnī orthodoxy (p. 26). Cf. Rainer Brunner. 'La question de la falsification du Coran dans l'exégèse chiite duodécimaine.' *Arabica* (2005:52.1), pp. 1–42.
- 191 See the introduction to *Revelation and Falsification*. Also see review by Mustafa Shah in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (2011:74.02), pp. 316–19. Elsewhere, I have pointed out that 'It is important to note that the construct of *tahṛīf* has a somewhat vague history both in terms of its provenance and semantic compass, which appears to have gone through several phases of gestation.' To suggest that there existed a uniform notion of *tahṛīf ab initio* is difficult to substantiate. Texts devoted to *tahṛīf* are ascribed to various individuals who precede al-Sayyārī such as Muḥammad b. Khālid al-Barqī (flor. early 3rd/9th century); additionally, there are statements attributed to eminent Shī'ite authorities, but these surface in the later literature. (the discussion in f/ns 189 and 191 is mostly based on a summary of the review of the work in the *Bulletin*) For more on the different sects and groups see al-Nawbakhtī, al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā. *Firaq al-Shī'a*. Edited by Muḥammad Ṣādiq Āl Baḥr al-'Ulūm. Najaf: al-Maktaba al-Murtaḍawīyya, 1932.
- 192 Al-Ṭabrisī, Abū 'Alī al-Faḍl ibn al-Ḥasan. *Majma' al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 5 vols. Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāt, n.d. In fact he states that it is the most noble, resplendent, astounding, auspicious, revered, unsurpassed, beneficial and constructive of all the sciences (vol. 1, p. 19.). Writing from a Sunnī perspective, al-Dhahabī describes his *tafsīr* as being a monumental work despite its Shī'ite and Mu'tazilī leanings (p. 109). Also vocalised as Ṭabarsī
- 193 Al-Ṭabrisī, *Majma'*, vol. 1, pp. 22–34. Interestingly, he claims that the traditions which touch upon their being omissions originated with the *aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*, who were unaware of the flaws with regards to their authenticity. This is a theme taken up by Hossein Modarressi. 'Early Debates on the Integrity of the Qur'ān.' *Studia Islamica* (1993:77), pp. 5–39, although see the point made in

- the review of Kohlberg/Moezzi with regards to the Sunnī aim of such discussions. And it is also linked with the idea of the Qur'ān being revealed in one *ḥarf* and not seven as was the predominant view in Shī'ism. For later trends within Shī'ite exegesis see Todd Lawson. Akhbārī Shī'ī Approaches to *tafsīr*.' In *Approaches to the Qur'ān*. Edited by G. R. Hawting and Abdul-Kader pp. 173–210.
- 194 Hāshim ibn Sulaymān al-Bahrānī. *Al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 9 vols. Group of editors. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'lamī li'l-Maṭbū'āt, 1999.
- 195 al-Bahrānī. *Al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 10.
- 196 For more on the foundations of Shī'ite exegesis see Abdulaziz A. Sachedina. *The Prolegomena to the Qur'ān*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, which is a translation of a 20th century Shī'ite work on the Qur'ānic sciences by Al-Sayyid Abū'l-Qāsim al-Mūsawī al-Khū'ī (d. 1992). Translated with an introduction. al-Khū'ī, Abū'l-Qāsim ibn 'Alī Akbar al-Mūsawī. *Al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. Beirut, Manshūrāt Mu'assasat al-A'lamī, 1974. Abdul, Musa O. A. *The Qur'an: Shaykh Tabarsi's Commentary*. Lahore, Pakistan: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1977. Asma Afsaruddin. 'Constructing Narratives of Monition and Guile: the Politics of Interpretation.' *Arabica* (2001:48.3), pp. 315–351. Asma Afsaruddin, 'Sunnī-Shī'ī Dialectics and the Qur'ān.' In *Coming to Terms with the Qur'ān: A Volume in Honor of Professor Issa Boullata, McGill University*. Edited by Khaleel Mohammed and Andrew Rippin, North Haledon, NJ: Islamic Publications International, 2008, pp. 107–123. Diana Steigerwald 'Twelver Shī'ī *ta'wīl*.' In *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005, pp. 373–85.
- 197 Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī. *Al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. Edited by 20 vols. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'lamī li'l-Maṭbū'āt, 1973 and 1974. Ibn Bābawayhi 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn. *Al-Imāma wa'l-tabṣira min al-ḥayra*. Qumm: Madrasat al-Imām al-Mahdī, 1983.
- 198 al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān. *Asās al-Ta'wīl*. Edited by 'Arif Tāmir. Beirut: Dar al-Thaqāfa, 1960. Al-Nu'mān also speaks of pairs being the basis of all single entities. Also see the discussion by Ismail Poonawala. 'Ismā'īlī *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān.' In *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 199–222. 1988. And Ismail Poonawala. 'An Ismā'īlī Treatise on the *I'jāz al-Qur'ān*. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (1988:108.3), pp. 379–385. And Diana Steigerwald 'Ismā'īlī *ta'wīl*.' In *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005, pp. 386–400. Brief aspects of the issue are taken up in Ian Netton. *Muslim Neoplatonists: an Introduction to the Thought of the Brethren of Purity*. New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002, pp. 95–99. Cf. Henry Corbin. *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*. London: Kegan Paul, 1983. For classical Sunnī views on this see: Ibn Ḥazm, Abū Muḥammad 'Alī ibn Aḥmad. *al-Fiṣal fī'l-mīlāl wa'l-ahwā' wa'l-niḥāl*, 4 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Naṣr and 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-'Umayra. Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1985, vol. 2, p. 274f.
- 199 al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān. *Asās al-Ta'wīl*, pp. and Farhad Daftary. *A Short History of the Ismailis*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998, pp. 2, 33, 51, 86, 92, 94, 138, 139, 142, 167. Daftary sees these processes as having their origin in the Shī'ī milieu of Iraq, p. 51. Daftary argues that early Ismā'īlī sources accorded equal significance to both the *ẓāhir* and the *baṭīn* and this can be inferred from later Fāṭimid literature. He also points out that the anti-religious views propagated by the Qarāmiṭa in Bāḥrayn were used to tar the Ismā'īlī movement (pp. 52–3) by Sunnī opponents. Still, mainstream criticisms of such approaches abounded: the Andalusian legal theorist Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī describes such forms of *bāṭinī*

- exegesis as being based on a rejection of *'aql and naql*; and he also speaks of its being incomprehensible: *al-Muwāfaqāt fī uṣūl al-sharī'ā*. 4 vols. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh Drāz. Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, vol. 1, p. 86. One also finds criticisms of such cosmologies in a number of the introductory sections of major *tafsīr* works, notably Abū Ḥayyān's *Baḥr al-muḥīṭ* and Ibn 'Aṭīyyah's *al-Muḥarrar*. Steigerwald refers to two types of *ta'wīl*: the supreme *ta'wīl* which is the preserve of the *imāms*; and a lower level of exegesis exercised by individual members of the Ismā'īlī mission: Diana Steigerwald 'Ismā'īlī *ta'wīl*.' p. 387. She draws attention to important distinctions which separate Ṣūfī and Ismā'īlī forms of *ta'wīl*, intimating that the latter is characterized by an intellectual approach. See also the collection devoted to Shī'ism *Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies* (Routledge 2009). Edited with a new introduction by Colin Turner and Paul Luft. Also see M. Bar-Asher. 'Outlines of Early Ismā'īlī-Fātimī Qur'ān Exegesis.' In *A Word Fitly Spoken. Studies in Mediaeval Exegesis of the Hebrew Bible and the Qur'ān presented to Haggai Ben-Shammai*. Edited by M. M. Bar-Asher, B. Chiesa, S. Hopkins, and S. Stroumsa, Jerusalem 2007, pp. 303–34. For a survey of al-Nu'mān's legal exegesis of the Qur'ān see Husain. K. B. Qutbuddin. 'Fātimid Legal Exegesis of the Qur'ān: The Interpretive Strategies Used by al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān (d. 363/974) in his *Da'ā'im al-Islām*.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2010:12), pp. 109–46. Qutbuddin shows, through reference to Nu'mān's *Ikhtilāf uṣūl al-madhāhib*, the importance of the Imām in his definitive role as the interpreter of the sources.
- 200 Abū Ḥātim's *Kitāb al'lām al-nubuwwa*, London: Dār al-Sāqī, 2003. See pp. 91, 69, the chapters on *Shā'n al-Qur'ān*, pp. 173–203.
- 201 Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Keys to the Arcana: Shahrastānī's Esoteric Commentary on the Qur'an. A translation of the commentary on Sūrat al-Fāṭiḥa* from Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī's *Mafātīḥ al-asrār wa-maṣābīḥ al-abrār* / Toby Mayer; with the Arabic text reproduced from the edition by M. A. Adharshab. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2009. See also the Arabic edition of al-Shahrastānī, Abū'l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm. *Mafātīḥ al-asrār wa-maṣābīḥ al-abrār*. Edited by Muḥammad 'Alī Ādharshab. Tehran: Markaz al-Buḥūth wa'l-Dirāsāt li'-Turāth wa'l-Makhṭūṭ; Mu'assasat al-Dirāsāt al-Ismā'īliyya, 2008. al-Shahrastānī, Abū'l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm. *Al-Milāl wa'l-niḥāl*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Sayyid al-Kaylānī. Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1961. al-Shahrastānī, Abū'l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm. *Nihāyat al-iqdām fī 'ilm al-kalām*. Translated and edited by Alfred Guillaume, *The Summa Philosophiae of al-Shahrastānī*. London: Oxford University Press, 1934 (note also the alternative title: '*Nihāyat al-aqdām*'). Mayer has pointed out that the exegetical analysis of verses in the *Arcana* is rarely linked to the explicit sayings of the *imāms*, p. 24, which underlines the unique approach adopted in the work.
- 202 See the edition of Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj al-Tūsī. *Kitāb al-luma' fī l-taṣawwuf*. Edited by Reynold Alleyne Nicholson. (E. J. W. Gibb Memorial vol. XXII) Leiden: E.J. Brill and London: Luzac and Co. 1914. See the chapter on Ṣūfistic method of interpretation of the Koran and the traditions, with examples pp. 105–19 Al-Qushayrī, 'Abd al-Karīm. *Laṭā'if al-ishārāt*, 6 vols. Edited by Ibrāhīm Bayūnī. Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1968. al-Burūsawī, Ismā'īl Ḥaqqī. *Tafsīr Rūḥ al-bayān*. 10 vols. Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, n.d. based on the 1912 reprint. Gerhard Böwering. 'The Light Verse: Qur'ānic Text and Sūfī Interpretation.' *Oriens*, vol. 36 (2001), pp. 113–144. Gerhard Böwering. 'From the Word of God to the Vision of God: Muḥammad's Heavenly Journey in Classical Ṣūfī Qur'ān commentary.' In *Le voyage initiatique en terre d'islam. Ascensions célestes*

- et itinéraires spirituels*. Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi. Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes: Section des Sciences Religieuses. Leuven: Peeters, 1996, pp. 205–221. Abū al-Ma'ālī Šadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī. *I'jāz al-Bayān fī ta'wīl umm al-Qur'ān*. Edited by 'Abd al-Qādir Aḥmad Aṭā. Dār al-Kutub al-Hadītha, 1969. (published under the title *Tafsīr al-Šūfī li'l-Qur'ān*). al-Sulamī, Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *Tafsīr al-Sulamī; wa-huwa ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr*. 2 vols. Edited by Sayyid 'Imrān. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2001. al-Sulamī, Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *Ziyādāt ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr*. Edited by Gerhard Böwering. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1995. Alan Godlas. 'Psychology and Self-Transformation in the Šūfī Qur'ān Commentary of Rūzbihān al-Baqlī.' *Sufi Illuminations*, 1, 1996, pp. 31–62. Annabel Keeler. 'Zāhir and bāṭin in Maybudī's *Kashf al-asrār*' in *Proceedings of the Third European Conference of Iranian Studies. Part 2: Medieval and Modern Persian Studies*. Edited by Charles Melville. Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz, 167–78. 1999. Annabel Keeler. 2006. *Sufi Hermeneutics: The Qur'ān Commentary of Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. Ronald Nettler. *Šūfī Metaphysics and Qur'ānic Prophets: Ibn 'Arabī's Thought and Method in the Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2003. Claude Addas. *Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life of Ibn 'Arabī*. Translated by Peter Kingsley. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society 1993. (Translation of *Ibn 'Arabī, ou, La quete du soufre rouge*, Paris, Gallimard). Ibn 'Arabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn. *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Edited by Abū'l-'Alā' 'Afīfī. Cairo, Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, 1946. Roger Arnaldez. *Les sciences coraniques: grammaire, droit, théologie et mystique*. Paris: Vrin, 2005. Jamal J. Elias. *The Throne Carrier of God: The Life and Thought of 'Alā' ad-Dawla as Simnānī*. Albany, State University of New York Press. 1995. Abdurrahman Habil. 'Traditional Esoteric Commentaries on the Qur'ān.' In *Islamic Spirituality: Foundations*. Edited by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, New York: Crossroad, 1987, pp. 24–47. al-Daylamī, Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī. *Kitāb al-'Atf al-alif al-ma'lūf 'alā'l-lām al-ma'ūf*. Edited by Ḥasan al-Shāfi'ī and Joseph Norment Bell. Cairo, Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Miṣrī, Beirut 2007.
- 203 See the translation of the *Tafsīr al-Tustarī* (Sahl b. 'Abd Allāh) by Annabel Keeler and Ali Keeler. *Great Commentaries on the Holy Qur'ān*. Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought. Louisville Fons Vitae. 2011. Pilar Clemente Garrido. *Estudio y edición de la Risālat al-ḥurūf del sufi Sahl al-Tustarī (con traducción de la sección sobre Yā'-sīn y de los pasajes de su Tafsīr que tratan de las letras)*. *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes*; 2008. vol. 19, pp. 67–79.
- 204 See Gerhard Böwering. 'The Qur'ān Commentary of al-Sulamī.' In *Studies Presented to Charles J. Adams*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991, pp. 41–56, p. 55. Paul Nwyia. 'Le tafsīr mystique attribué à Ja'far Šādiq: édition critique'. *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* (43.4) pp. 179–230. 1967 and Paul Nwyia. *Exégèse coranique et langage mystique: nouvel essai sur le lexique technique des mystiques musulmanes*. Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq, Imprimerie Catholique, 1970. There are issues about the differences between the Šūfī and Shī'ite rescensions of Ja'far's *Tafsīr*: see the recent work by Farhana Mayer: *Spiritual Gems: the Mystical Qur'ān Commentary Ascribed to Ja'far al-Šādiq as Contained in Sulamī's Ḥaqā'iq al-Tafsīr from the Text of Paul Nwyia*. Translated and Annotated by Farhana Mayer. Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2011, pp. xxv–xxix. Mayer points out that although academically it is impossible to ascertain the historical origin of the text and its various parts, one does need to bear in mind that the spritual and mystical content of the work is significant for students of the Qur'ān and Qur'ānic commentary (p. xxv). Gerhard Böwering. 'The Major Sources of Sulamī's Minor Qur'ān Commentary'. *Oriens* (1996:35), pp. 35–56. Qamar al-Huda. 'Qur'ān and Ḥadīth in the School of al-Suhrawardī.' In *Coming to Terms with the Qur'ān*:

- a *Volume in Honor of Professor Issa Boullata, McGill University*. Edited by Khaleel Mohammed, Andrew Rippin. NJ Islamic Publications, 2008, pp. 159–76. Anna. Akasoy. *Philosophie und Mystik in der späten Almohadenzeit. Die Sicilianischen Fragen des Ibn Sab'īn*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005.
- 205 Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī. *Qūt al-qulūb fī mu'āmalat al-maḥbūb wa-waṣf ṭarīq al-murīd ilā maqām al-tawḥīd*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1993, vol. 1, p. 106.
- 206 Abū'l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī. *Laṭā'if al-ishārāt*. Edited by Ibrāhīm al-Baysūnī. Foreward by Ḥasan 'Abbās Zakī. Cairo: Dār al-Kātib al-'Arabī li'l-Ṭibā'a wa'l-Nashr. Martin Nguyen. *Sufi Master and Qur'ān Scholar, Abū'l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī and the Laṭā'if al-Ishārāt*. Oxford University Press in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2012. Madjid Yaddaden. Exégèse coranique: *La'ese c al-ishārāt de Abū l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī* (m. 465–1072). Unpublished doctoral thesis. École Partique des Hautes Études, Sorbonne, 2005. For issues surrounding the edition of the text see Martin Nguyen. *Sufi Master*, pp. 99–101 and also pp. 117 (f/n 84). See also the discussion of more general treatment of the exegetical works attributed to him, pp. 94–111. Annabel Keeler. 'Sufi *tafsīr* as a Mirror: al-Qushayrī the *Murshid* in his *Laṭā'if al-ishārāt*'. *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2006:8), pp. 1–21. This fusing of the mystical and traditional can be seen in his discussion of Q. 2:29 in which reference is made to God's teaching Ādam the names of all things, including *asmā' al-ḥaqq*, vol. 1, p. 88. See also al-Qushayrī. 'Abd al-Karīm. *Al-Risāla al-Qushayriyya*. Edited by Khalīl al-Manṣūr. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2001. A. Schimmel, *Deciphering the Signs of God: A Phenomenological Approach to Islam* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994.
- 207 Kristin Zahra Sands. *Šūfī Commentaries*, p. 3. She refers to the 'unending process' of interpretation which is different for each individual and that in this sense Šūfī interpretations are 'suggestive rather than declarative', adding that 'they therefore indicate possibilities as much as they demonstrate the insights of each writer.' An survey of *tafsīr al-ishāra* is provided by al-Dhahabī see *al-Tafsīr wa'l-mufasssīrūn*, vol. 2, pp. 366–454. Al-Dhahabī in his history of *tafsīr* speaks of *bāṭinī* forms of *tafsīr* undermining *ẓāhirī* exegesis. Al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr*, pp. 382–399. Note also that some scholars pointed to its being a largely subjective exercise predisposed to the vagaries of individual experience: Some classical scholars divided *tafsīr al-ishārī* into two strands: the first of which encompasses exegetical allusions that were readily reconciled with the general strictures of traditional teachings; while the second is viewed as embodying allusive exegetical thoughts, which verged on the incomprehensible for the uninitiated. The Hanbalite theologian and Jurist Ibn Qayyim (d. 751/1350) equated *tafsīr al-ishārī* with exegesis by analogy, although he stipulated general conditions which had to be applied when assessing the value of such forms of exegesis. Ibn al-Qayyim: *al-Tibyan fī aymān al-Qur'ān*. Edited by 'Abd Allāh ibn Sālim. Jeddah: Dār 'Ālam al-Fawā'id, 2008, p. 124 ff.
- 208 See for example al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān*, vol. 2, pp. 170–71, although this particular criticism is derived from Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's *Fatāwā wa-masā'il Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ fī'l-tafsīr wa'l-ḥadīth wa'l-uṣūl wa'l-fiqh* (the edition also includes *adab al-muftī wa'l-mustafī*). 2 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Mu'ī Amīn Qal'ajī. Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1987, p. 196. See also the *Itqān* which repeats the discussions about the notoriety of the *ḥaqā'iq*. Al-Sulamī, Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *Tafsīr al-Sulamī; wa-huwa ḥaqā'iq al-tafsīr*. 2 vols. Edited by Sayyid 'Imrān. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2001. Florian Sobieroj. 'The Mu'tazila and Sufism.' In *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*. Edited by De Jong & B. Radtke Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1999, pp. 68–92 Carl. Ernst, *Rūzbihān Baqlī: Mysticism and the Rhetoric of Sainthood in Persian Sufism*. Richmond: Surrey, Curzon Press. 1996.

- 209 Ibn Juzayy, *Kitāb al-tashīl*, p. 13.
- 210 For selected examples of his exegesis see Ibn 'Arabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn. *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*. 9 vols. Edited by Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Imiyya. Vol. 7, pp. 148–287. Abū Zayd, Naṣr Ḥāmid. *Falsafat al-ta'wīl: dirāsa fī ta'wīl al-Qur'ān 'inda Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī*. Beirut: Dār al-Tanwīr, 1983. Paul Ballanfat, 'Reality and Image in the *Tafsīr* of Kubrā and Rāzī'. *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society*, 2004, vol. 35, pp. 75–108. W. C. Chittick. *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989. A. J. Arberry. *The Doctrine of the Sufis: Kitāb al-Ta'arruf li-Madhhab ahl al-Tasawwuf*, translated from the Arabic of Abū Bakr al-Kalābādhī, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977. T., Burckhardt. *The Wisdom of the Prophets: 'Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam'*, Aldsworth: Beshara Publications, 1975. Ibn 'Arabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī, *The Bezels of Wisdom*; translation and introduction by R. W. J. Austin; preface by Titus Burckhardt, Mahwah, N. J.: Paulist Press, 1980. W. Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God*, Albany, N. Y.: State University of New York Press, 1988. Ibn 'Arabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn. *Les Illuminations de la Meque: The Meccan Illuminations. Texts choicis/selected texts*; M. Chodkiewicz (ed.) with the collaboration of W. C. Chittick et al, Paris: Islām/Sindbad, 1988. R. Nettler, 'Ibn 'Arabī as the Qur'ānic Thinker: Reflection on Adam in the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*.' *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies*, 13:2 (1992), pp. 91–102. For more on Ibn 'Arabī's method of allusion see Sands. *Sūfī Commentary*, pp. 39–41. Maurice Gloton. 'The Qur'ānic Inspiration of Ibn 'Arabī's Vocabulary of Love: Etymological Links and Doctrinal Development.' Translated by Cecilia Twinch. *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi Society* (2000:27), pp. 37–52. Ahmet T. Karamustafa. *Sufism: The Formative Period*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007. Alexander Knysch. *Ibn 'Arabī in the Later Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999. For the traditionalist critique of Ibn 'Arabī see Ibn Taymiyya. *Jāmi' al-rasā'il li Ibn Taymiyya*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Shād Sālim. Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Madanī (Maktabat Ibn Taymiyya), 1969, vol. 1, pp. 201–06. He has an epistle entitled *Risāla fī'l-radd 'alā Ibn 'Arabī fī da'wā īymān Fir'awn*, which is based on material from the *Fuṣūṣ*.
- 211 For details of all these commentaries see Sands, pp. 67–78. James Morris. 'Ibn 'Arabī and his Interpreters.' Parts I and II. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (1987:107), pp. 101–19. Pierre Lory. *Les commentaires ésotériques du Coran d'après Qashani*. Paris: Les Deux Océans, 1980. Hermann Landolt. 'Der Briefwechsel zwischen al-Kāshānī und Simnānī über *Waḥdat al-Wuḡūd*.' *Der Islam* (1973:50), pp. 29–81. 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī. *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfiyya*. Edited by Aloys Sprenger. Calcutta, 1845. *Idem*. *Sharḥ 'alā fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Cairo, Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1903–4. Abū'l-Faḍl Rashīd al-Dīn, al-Maybudī. *Kashf al-asrār wa-'uddat al-abrār*. Edited by 'Alī Aṣghar Hikmat. 10 vols. Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1952–60.
- 212 This is incorrectly published as *Tafsīr Ibn 'Arabī, Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. 2 vols Edited by Muṣṭafā Ghālīb. Dār al-Andalus, 1978. Cf. with al-Nu'man's reference in *Asās al-ta'wīl*, p. 30 and the tradition he quotes which mentions the Prophet declaring that each verse revealed to him had a *zāhir* (outer) and a *bāṭin* (inner) sense.
- 213 Al-Alūsī, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Sayyid Maḥmūd. *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm wa'l-saba' al-mathānī*. 30 parts in 15 vols. Edited by Maḥmūd Shukrī Al-Alūsī. Beirut: Ihyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1987 pp. 9, 11, 25 f.
- 214 See John Burton. *Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām's K. al-Nāsikh wa'l-mansūkh*. Edited with a commentary. Cambridge: Trustees of the "E. J. W. Gibb Memorial",

- 1987 (Ms. Istanbul, Topkapı, Ahmet III A 143). Al-Naḥḥās, Abū Ja'far Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. *al-Nāsikh wa'l-mansūkh fī kitāb illāh wa-ikhtilāf al-'ulamā' fī dhalik*. 3 vols. Edited by Sulayman ibn Ibrāhīm al-Lāḥim. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla. 1991. See also the text on the subject by the Ash'arite scholar 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī. *Al-Nāsikh wa'l-mansūkh*. Edited by Ḥilmī Kāmil As'ad. Ammān: Dār al-'Adawī, n.d. And Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib. Abū Muḥammad. *al-Īdāh li-nāsikh al-Qur'ān wa-mansūkhīhi wa-ma'rifat uṣūl wa-ikhtilāf al-nās fīhi*. Edited by Aḥmad Ḥasan Farḥāt. Jeddah: Dār al-Manāra, 1986. Mustafa Zayd. *Al-Naskh fī'l-Qur'ān*. Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabī, 1963. John Burton. *The Sources of Islamic Law: Islamic Theories of Abrogation*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990. See the text ascribed to al-Zuhrī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn Shihāb. *Al-Nasikh wa'l-mansūkh fī'l-Qur'ān al-karīm*. Edited by Muṣṭafā Maḥmūd al-Azhārī. Cairo: Dār Ibn 'Affān; Dār ibn al-Qayyim, 2008. Also see the Sunnī defence by al-Bāqillānī, Abū Bakr Ibn Ṭayyib. *al-Intiṣār li'l-Qur'ān*. 2 vols. Edited by M. al-Qudāh, Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2001. John Burton, 'The Interpretation of Q. 87:6–7 and the Theories of naskh.' *Der Islam* (1985:), pp. 5–20. John. Burton, 'Those Are the High-Flying Cranes.' *Journal of Semitic Studies* 15 (1970:15), pp. 246–64. Andrew Rippin. 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī and the Study of the Qur'ān.' *Al-Bayān* (2012:10.1), pp. 1–15.
- 215 al-Wāḥidī, Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Naysābūrī. *Al-Wasīṭ fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd*. 4 vols. Edited by 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd, 'Alī Mu'awwad, Aḥmad al-Jamal, Aḥmad al-Ṣayra, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Awaīs. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1994. al-Wāḥidī, Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Naysābūrī. *Asbāb al-nuzūl*. Edited by S. M. 'Uqayl. Beirut, Dār al-Jil, 2001. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī. Aḥmad ibn Alī. *Al-'Ujāb fī bayān al-asbāb*. Edited by Fawwāz Aḥmad Zamraḷī. Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2002. Abū Ḥayyān, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, vol. 1, p. 530. He adds that the books of *tafsīr* are often replete with such dubious materials and speaks of the need for authors to focus on including authenticated sources. For works on *asbāb* see Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 40 and Ḥājjī Khalīfa. *Kashf al-ẓunūn 'an asāmī al-kutub wa'l-funūn*. 2 vols. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, n.d. vol. 1, pp. 76–77. Jamal Bassām. *Asbāb al-nuzūl: 'ilmun min 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Dār al-Bayḍā': al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-'Arabī, 2005.
- 216 al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *Taḥṣīl naẓā'ir al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Ḥusnī Naṣr Zaydān. n.p. 1969.
- 217 al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Dāmighānī. *al-Wujūh wa'l-naẓā'ir li-alfāz kitāb illāh al-azīz*. Edited by 'Arabī 'Abd al-Ḥamīd 'Alī. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya. al-Dāmighānī used an alphabetic arrangement ('*alā ḥurūf al-mu'jāma*). For works on the lexicon of the Qur'ān see Elsaid Badawi and Abdel Haleem. *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'ānic Usage*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2008. See also Mustansir Mir. *Dictionary of Qur'ānic Terms and Concepts*. NY: 1987. Arne Amadeus Ambros. *A Concise Dictionary of Koranic Arabic*. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2004. Martin Zammit. *A Comparative Lexical Study of Qur'ānic Arabic*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002.
- 218 Al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn. *Talkhīṣ al-bayān fī majāzāt al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ghanī Ḥasan. Cairo: 'Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1955. Al-Zamalkānī, Kamāl al-Dīn, 'Abd al-Wahīd ibn 'Abd al-Karīm. *al-Burhān al-Kāshif 'an i'jāz al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Khadījah al-Ḥadīthī and Aḥmad Maṭlūb. Baghdad: al-Jumhūriyah al-'Iraqiyah, Ri'āsat Diwān al-Awqaf, 1974. Issa Boullata 'The Rhetorical Interpretation of the Qur'ān: *I'jāz* and Related Topics' In *Approaches to The History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, pp. 139–57. Anthony Johns. 'A Humanistic Approach to *i'jāz* in the Qur'ān: The Transfiguration of Language.'

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- 219 'Abd al-Jabbār, ibn Aḥmad al-Qaḍī al-Asadābādī. *Mutashābih al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Muḥammad Zarzūr. Cairo: Dār al-Turāth. 1969. Cf. *Idem*, *Kitāb Tanzīh al-Qur'ān 'an al-maṭā'in*. Beirut, Dār al-Nahḍā, n.d. al-Kirmānī, Maḥmūd ibn Ḥamza. *al-Burhān fī tawjīh mutashābih al-Qur'ān limā fīhi min al-ḥujja wa'l-bayān*. Edited by 'Abd al-Qāhir Aḥmad 'Aṭā. Cairo: Dār al-Faḍīla 1977. Al-Naysābūrī, Maḥmūd ibn Abū'l-Ḥasan. *I'jāz al-bayān 'an ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*. 2 vols. Edited by Hanīf ibn Ḥasan al-Qāsimī. Beirut: Dār al-Garb al-Islāmī, 1995. Ibn al-Zubayr al-Thaqafī, Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm. *Milāk al-ta'wīl al-qāṭi' bi-dhawī al-ilḥād wa'l-ta'tīl fī tawjīh mutashābih al-lafz min ayy al-tanzīl*. 2 vols. Edited by Sa'īd al-Fallāh. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1983.
- 220 al-Ṭaḥāwī, Abū Ja'far Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. 2 vols. (four parts). Edited by Sa'd al-Dīn Awnāl. Istanbul: Markaz al-Buḥūth al-Islamiyya, 1998. al-Kiyā al-Harrāsī, 'Imād al-Dīn ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī. *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. 2 vols. Edited by a group of scholars. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1983. Al-Jaṣṣās, Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Rāzī. *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. 3 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Salām Shāhīn. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1994. See also Al-Jaṣṣās, Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Rāzī. *Al-Fuṣūl fī'l-uṣūl*. 4 vols. 2nd edi. Edited by 'Ajīl Jāsim al-Nashmī. Kuwait: Wazārat al-Awqāf Wa'l-Shu'un

- al-Islāmiyya, 1994. Ismā'īl ibn Ishāq, al-Qāḍī Abū Ishāq. *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. Edited by 'Amir Ḥasan Ṣabrī. Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2005.
- 221 al-Nasā'ī, Aḥmad ibn Shu'ayb Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *Tafsīr al-Nasā'ī*. 2 vols. Edited by Ṣabrī ibn 'Abd al-Khālīq al-Shāfi'ī and Sayyid ibn 'Abbās al-Jalīmī. Mu'assasat al-Beirut: Kutub wa'l-Thaqāfa, 1990. It is notable that al-Zarkashī states that his effort on *tafsīr* existed as a text which collated the statements of the Companions and the Followers, *al-Burhān*, vol. 2, p. 159. Whether al-Nasā'ī's work was originally an independent work was even debated among classical scholars.
- 222 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad, Ibn Abī Ḥātim. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm musnad(an) 'ān rasūl Allāh, wa'l-ṣaḥāba wa'l-tabi'īn*. As'ad Muḥammad al-Ṭayyib. 10 vols. Mecca; Riyāḍh: Maktabat Nizār al-Bāz, 1997. The manuscript is incomplete.
- 223 Ibn al-Mundhir, Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm. *Kitāb tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 2 vols. Sa'd ibn Muḥammad al-Sa'd. Madina. Dār al-Ma'āthir, 2002. Only part of the work has been published. Ibn Taymiyya explains that differences in the area of tafsīr could be attributed to two factors: the first of which is the result of issues of transmission and the second stems from matters of deduction and reasoning. He then claims that works which simply recounted the statements of the Ṣaḥāba and the Followers rarely contain such types of differences and he lists the following compilations: 'Abd al-Razzāq; Wakī'; 'Abd ibn Ḥumayd; 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ibrāhīm Duḥaym; *tafsīr* al-Imām Aḥmad, Ishāq ibn Rāhawayhi, Baqī ibn Mukhlad, Ibn al-Mundhir, Sufyān ibn 'Uyayna. Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū'*, vol. 13, p. 355. See also Aisha Geissinger, 'The Exegetical traditions of 'Ā'isha: Notes on their Impact and Significance.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2004:6.1), pp. 1–20.
- 224 Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh. *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*. Edited by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā'. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2002, vol. 2, pp. 240–590.
- 225 Cf. Todd Lawson. *The Crucifixion and the Qur'ān: A Study in the History of Muslim Thought*. Oxford: One World Publications. 2009, pp. 43–67. See Review Article of the book in *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2010:12.1), pp. 191–203. Lawson states about *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* that it allows opinions to be offered 'without being bound by the interpretations of the verse found in the traditions', but in the eyes of classical commentators, *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* was understood in much more nuanced terms.
- 226 Al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *Al-Durr al-Manthūr bi'l-tafsīr bi'l-manthūr*. 16 vols. Edited by 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī. Cairo: Markaz Hajr li'l-Buḥūth wa'l-Dirāsāt al-'Arabiyya wa'l-Islāmiyya, 2003. Individual exegetical issues are also ruminated over in al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *Al-Ḥāwī li'l-fatāwī*. 2 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Laṭīf Ḥasan. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1997.
- 227 Al-Zarkashī, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Bahādir ibn 'Abd Allāh. *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Muḥammad Abū'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 4 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, n.d., vol. 1, p. 15 and vol. 2, pp. 146–153. Also relevant to the legal implications of theories and concepts of exegesis is al-Zarkashī's *Al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ fī uṣūl al-fiqh*. 8 vols. 2nd edition. Edited by 'Abd al-Qādir al-'Ānī. Kuwait: Wizārat al-Awqāf Wa'l-Shu'ūn al-Islāmiyya. 1992 and *idem*, *Tashnīf al-Masāmi' bi-jamī' al-jawāmi' li-Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī*. 2 vols. Edited by Abū 'Amr al-Ḥusaynī. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2000. See the survey on exegetical sciences by Jane McAuliffe in *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005, pp. 403–419. A study of the features

- of the two seminal texts of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* is provided in: Hāzīm Sa'īd Ḥaidār. *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān bayn al-Burhān wa'l-Itqān: Dirāsa muqārana*. Madinah: Dār al-Zamān, 1420 A.H. On the *Itqān* see the study entitled: Kenneth Nolin. *The Itqān and its Sources: A Study of al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān* by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī with Special Reference to *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān* by al-Zarkashī. PhD thesis. Hartford Seminary, 1968. Although, Claude Gilliot advises the work be used with caution because of the book's comprising numerous mistakes: *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, vol. 5, p. 330. This is mentioned in his article on 'Traditional Disciplines', which also provides a survey of Qur'ānic sciences based on the *Itqān*. Muḥammad Ṣafā Shaykh Ḥaqqī. *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān min khilāl muqaddimāt al-tafsīr*. 2 vols. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 2004. In the chapter dedicated to a gauging of the semantic and technical nuances of the terms *tafsīr*, *ta'wīl* and *ma'nā*, al-Zarkashī provides a theoretical outline of the historical sources and methodological procedures of *tafsīr*, defining not only the overarching frameworks through which *tafsīr* was conventionally pursued, but also its vitality to current religious discourses. Al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān*, vol. 2, p. 156 ff.
- 228 Similar theoretical distinctions between the meaning of *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* were discerned as far back by Muqātil ibn Sulaymān (150/767). During the early years of its development, the term *tafsīr* was interchangeably used with the word *ta'wīl* to denote the practice of exegesis with a number of the seminal works from the first three centuries of the Islamic tradition often featuring one of the terms in their title. See Andrew Rippin. 'Tafsīr' and Claude Gilliot. 'Exegesis of the Qur'an: Classical and Medieval.' In *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*. Edited by Jane McAuliffe, 5 vols. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001–6, vol. II, pp. 99–124. It is suggested that the etymology of the word is Syriac. As discussed in the section on the grammarians and early *tafsīr*, exegetical literature fell under a number of different rubrics, including *gharīb* texts, which were devoted to the selective lexical paraphrasing of the Qur'ān's vocabulary; *Ma'ānī* texts, which pursued the grammatical justification of the language of the Qur'ān, often using poetic citation; *lughāt* texts which probed dialects and the etymology of words in the Qur'ān; *Mushkil* texts which probed grammatical angularities of the Qur'ānic diction.
- 229 Abū'l-Qāsim al-Hasan ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Ḥabīb. *Kitāb al-Tanbīh 'alā faḍl 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Karīm Kāzīm al-Rādī. *al-Mawrid* (1988.17.4), pp. 305–322, p. 307. Ibn al-Nadīm credits ibn al-Marzubānī (d. 309/921) (Muḥammad ibn Khalaf) with a work entitled *Kitāb al-ḥāwī fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, consisting of twenty-seven volumes. *Fihrist*, pp. 166–7. See his entry in al-Khaṭīb's *Ta'rikh Baghdād*. vol. 5, pp. 237–39.
- 230 'Alī ibn Faḍḍāl al-Majāshī. *al-Nukat fī'l-Qur'ān*. Edited by Ibrāhīm 'Alī. Riyāḍh: Dār al-Rushd, n.d. For a biography see al-Qifṭī, Jamāl al-Dīn. *Inbāh al-ruwāt*. vol. 2, pp. 36–3, pp. 299–301.
- 231 Note in al-Zurqānī's *Manāhil al-'irfān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, he mentions the work by al-Ḥūfī (d. 430/1039) entitled *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, suggesting it is one of the earliest texts on the subject which mixes commentary with basic hermeneutical categories, vol. 1, pp. 35–36. The title has proved to be questionable as elsewhere it is argued that it was simply '*tafsīr*' and not '*ulūm*'. As Yāqūt and Ḥajjī Khalifa both provide *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* as the title.
- 232 Arthur Jeffery. *Two Muqaddimas to the Qur'ānic Sciences; the Muqaddima to the Kitāb al-Mabānī, and the Muqaddima of Ibn 'Aṭīyya to his Tafsīr*, edited from the manuscript in Berlin. Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya, 1954. The *mabānī* is dated to the mid-fifth/eleventh century. See the preface to the work which mentions the author's reference to commencing the work in 425/1033

- and the fact that the text was used by Nöldeke. A number of research papers have speculated over the authorship of the text and its provenance; some suggest a North African origin. (MS Wetzstein 93 Berlin State Library).
- 233 See the discussion in the introduction to: Ibn Juzayy, *Kitāb al-tashīl* vol. 1. Pp. 10 and pp. 12–13.
- 234 Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū'l-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn. *Funūn al-afnān fī 'uyūn 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Ḥasan Ḍiyā' al-Dīn. Beirut: Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islamiyya, 1987. See p. 204 on which he mentions the seven *ahruf* tradition and includes a view which identifies its seven aspects with *muḥkam*; *mutashābih*; *nāsikh*; *mansūkh*; *khusūṣ*; *'umūm*; *qīṣaṣ*. Among his many works are: Ibn al-Jawzī. *Nuzhat al-a'yūn al-nawāzīr fī 'ilm al-wujūh wa'l-naẓā'ir*. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Karīm al-Rāḍī. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risala, 1987. Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū'l-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn. *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Muḥammad Ashraf 'Alī al-Malbārī. Madīnat al-Munawwara: 1984. Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū'l-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn. *Daf' shubha al-tashbīh bi'akaf al-tanzīh*. Beirut: Dār al-Hijra, 1990. Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū'l-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn. *al-Muntaẓam fī tā'rīkh al-umam wa'l-mulūk*, 18 vols. (ed.), Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā' & Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā'. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1992. Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū'l-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn. *Talbīs Iblīs*, ed. Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Ismā'īl and Mas'ad 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Sa'dānī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1998). Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū'l-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn. *Kitāb al-mawdū'āt*. 3 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad 'Uthmān. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1983.
- 235 Shihāb al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *Al-Murshid al-wajīz ilā 'ulūm tata'allaq bi'l-kitāb al-'azīz*. Edited by Tayār Qulāj. Beirut: Dār al-Sāder, 1975.
- 236 Also See Franz Rosenthal. *A History of Muslim Historiography*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1952, pp. 177–192 for a description of al-Kāfijī's influence on his peers.
- 237 Al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān. *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Muḥammad Salīm Ḥāshim. 2 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2000. Vol. 1, pp. 10–12.
- 238 Ibn 'Aqīla. *al-Ziyāda wa'l-iḥsān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Sharjah: Jāmi'at al-Shāriqa, 2007. The work was edited as a collection of theses.
- 239 A survey of the debates within the Islamic tradition à propos the codification of knowledge is found in al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī's *Taqyīd al-'ilm*; this details the arguments advanced by both opponents as well as advocates of codification; many of the discussions also apply to *tafsīr* works. Cf. Similar debates are proffered in Ibn 'Abd al-Barr. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm wa-faḍlihi*. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2007. Also al-Sakhāwī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, Abū'l-Khayr. *Faṭḥ al-mughīth bi-sharḥ alfiyyat al-ḥadīth*. 5 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Karīm al-Khuḍayr and Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh Āl-Fahayd. Riyāḍh: Dār al-Minhāj Li'l-Nashr wa'l-Tawzī', 1426 A.H. (2005). For a general survey of narration see al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī. *Kitāb al-kifāya fī 'ilm al-riwāya*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1988. Jamāl ad-Dīn al-Qāsimī. *Qawā'id al-taḥdīth min funūn muṣṭalah al-ḥadīth*. Damascus: Maktab an-Nashr al-'Arabī, 1935. A.H. 1352. Also al-Sakhāwī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, Abū'l-Khayr. *Faṭḥ al-mughīth bi-sharḥ alfiyyat al-ḥadīth*. 5 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Karīm al-Khuḍayr and Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh Āl-Fahayd. Riyāḍh: Dār al-Minhāj Li'l-Nashr wa'l-Tawzī', 1426 A.H. (2005).
- 240 See the work of Gregor Schoeler which attempts to explain the significance of mechanisms for the dissemination of knowledge in the early periods, especially the interface which defines the use of written and oral materials: Gregor Schoeler. *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*. Tr. Uwe Vagelpohl, edited by James Montgomery. London: Routledge, 2006. Cf. the review article by

Mustafa Shah in *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2008:10.1) pp. 98–128. And Gregor Schoeler. *The Genesis of Literature in Islam: from the Aural to the Read* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009). Translated by Shawkat Toowara. Cf. Michael Cook, 1997. 'The Opponents of the Writing of Tradition in Early Islam.' *Arabica* (1997:44), pp. 437–530. Relevant points are also discussed in Harald Motzki. *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence*; Harald Motzki, 'Quo vadis *Ḥadīth*-Forschung? Eine kritische Untersuchung von G. H. A. Juynboll: "Nafi' the *mawlā* of ibn 'Umar; and his position in Muslim *Ḥadīth* literature' *Der Islam* 73 (1996:73), pp. 40–80 and pp. 193–231. Somewhat related to this is G. N. Atiyeh (ed.), *The Book in the Islamic World: The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995). Paul Heck, 'The Epistemological Problem of Writing in Islamic Civilization: al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī's (d. 463/1071) *Taqyīd al-'ilm*.' *Studia Islamica* (2002:94), pp. 85–114. With regards to the issue of the transmission of early works see S. M. al-Samuk, 'Die historischen Überlieferungen nach Ibn Ishāq. Eine synoptische Untersuchung', (Frankfurt, Main: unpublished PhD thesis, 1978); M. Fleischammer, *Die Quellen des Kitāb al-Aghānī*, vol. 55/2 of *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* (Wiesbaden: n.p., 2004); Leon Zolondek, 'The Sources of the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*.' *Arabica* (1961:8), pp. 294–308; Leon Zolondek, 'An Approach to the Problem of the Sources of the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*.' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* (1960:19), pp. 217–34.

- 241 For details on the debate about the authenticity of the sources across the Islamic sciences see Herbert Berg. (ed.), *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*, Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, vol. 49. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003. The basis for this endeavour stems from an earlier project on Islam for the publication *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* (1996), which was edited by Berg and entitled *Islamic Origins Reconsidered: John Wansbrough and the Study of Early Islam*. Berg devoted the project to an assessment of the late John Wansbrough's impact on the debate concerning the origins and development of the Islamic tradition. The theme of salvation history played a significant role in Wansbrough's attempts to unravel the genesis of the Islamic tradition and the emergence of the Qur'ān. Berg invited individual scholars to contribute to an issue of the aforementioned journal, hoping that defenders, sympathisers, and opponents of Wansbrough's theory might share a circumspect discussion of his views. Berg believed that an issue of the journal which presented the broad spectrum of opinion on this emotive topic would prove to be invaluable. However, only those scholars who were advocates of Wansbrough's thesis and those who sympathised with his views took the opportunity to contribute, rendering the edition of the journal in question a rather 'one sided perspective', although Berg adds that it was positively received. The book therefore attempts to address this balance and is divided into four principal sections, namely: A. History and *Sīra*; B. *Sunnah* and *ḥadīth*; C. Qur'ān and *Tafsīr*; and, D. *Sharī'ah* and *Fiqh*, although these are described by Berg as being 'arbitrary headings'. The work comprises a total of twelve articles on specific aspects of the early Islamic tradition and the importance of the sources used to substantiate classical perceptions of the respective disciplines. Cf. Herbert Berg, 'Ibn 'Abbās in 'Abbasid-Era *tafsīr*', in *Occasional Papers of the School of Abbasid Studies*, pp. 129–146. Also see Andrew Rippin. 'Western Scholarship and the Qur'ān.' In *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*, pp. 235–51. See also Manfred Kropp (ed.). *Results of Contemporary Research on the Qur'ān: the Question of a Historio-critical Text of the Qur'ān*. Beirut: Orient-Institut; Würzburg: Ergon in Kommission, 2007.

- 242 General discussions relative to the issue of authenticity are discussed in Stephen Humphreys. *Islamic History*. London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997. Tarif Khalidi. *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Chase Robinson. *Islamic Historiography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Marco Schöller. 'Sīra and tafsīr: Muḥammad al-Kalbī on the Jews of Medina' in *The Biography of Muḥammad the Issue of the Sources*. Harald Motzki (ed.) Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), pp. 18–48. Harald Motzki, 'The Question of the Authenticity of Muslim Traditions Reconsidered: A Review Article' in Berg's *Method and Theory*, pp. 211–57. Gregor Schoeler 'Foundations for a new Biography of Muḥammad: the Production and Evaluation of the Corpus of Traditions from 'Urwah B. Zubayr.' In *Method and Theory*. Edited by H. Berg, pp. 21–28. Gerald Hawting. 'Qur'ānic Exegesis and History. In *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, pp. 408–421. David Kimmage, 'Sura 106 in tafsīr: Qur'ānic Commentary as a Historical Source.' *Manuscripta Orientalia* (2000:6.4), pp. 34–43. Stefan Leder, 'The Use of Composite Form in the Making of the Islamic Historical Tradition.' In *On Fiction and Adab in Medieval Arabic Literature*. Edited by Phillip Kennedy. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2005, pp. 125–145. Harald Motzki. 'Alternative Accounts of the Qur'ān's Formation.' In *Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*. Edited by Jane Dammen, McAuliffe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 59–75.
- 243 For a detailed survey of the core issues in the context of 'Islamic Origins' and authenticity see Fred Donner. *Narratives of Islamic Origins: Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing*. New Jersey: Princeton, 1998. Donner refers to the positivist outlook of the 'Descriptive Approach' which worked within the confines of the Islamic tradition's accounts of its development; he also speaks of the 'Source Critical Approach', which he points out has its origins in the middle of the nineteenth century and focuses on reviewing 'patent contradictions and logical absurdities in the sources through careful comparative source criticism' on the basis that the sources comprised both authentic and inauthentic materials and he points out that one of its assumptions is that the extant materials were based on written transmission (p. 9). Donner places Goldziher's work within the framework of a 'Tradition-Critical Approach' which is formulated around his rejection of the authenticity of the traditions on the basis that the extant sources are the culmination of long periods of reworking and development, although Donner adds that Goldziher was less skeptical about the historiographical sources and he does accept that there is an historical kernel of truth which lay at the heart of these materials (pp. 14–15). Finally Donner identifies the 'Skeptical Approach' which he suggests represents an 'outgrowth of Goldziher's work' on the basis that it goes a stage further in dismissing that there is 'any kernel of historical fact that might tell us "what actually happened"' (pp. 20–21). For the debates on *ḥadīth* see the definition offered by Berg above. Cf. John Barton's *The Nature of Biblical Criticism*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007, which discusses at length The 'Historical-Critical Method', pp. 31–68. Jane Smith I. *An Historical and Semantic Study of the Term 'Islām' as Seen in a Sequence of Qur'ān Commentaries*. Missoula, MT: Missoula Scholars Press, 1975.
- 244 For a review of the general discussions see Robert Hoyland. 'Writing the Biography of the Prophet Muḥammad: Problems and Solutions.' *History Compass* (2007.5), pp. 581–602. *Idem*. 'The Content and Context of Early Arabic Inscriptions'. *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, (1997:21), pp. 77–102. *Idem*. 'History, Fiction, and Authorship in the First Centuries of Islam.' In *Writing and Representation in Medieval Islam: Muslim Horizons*. Edited by Julia Bray. London

- and New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 16–46. *Idem*. ‘Epigraphy and the Linguistic Background to the Qur’ān.’ In G. Reynolds (ed.), *The Qur’ān in its Historical Context*. London: Routledge, 2008, pp. 51–69. *Idem*. ‘New Documentary Evidence and the Early Islamic State’ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (2006:69.3), pp. 395–416. Mustafa Azami. *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature: with a Critical Edition of Some Early Texts*, 3rd ed. Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1992. N. J. Coulson ‘European Criticism of Hadith Literature’, in *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, pp. 317–321. Wael Hallaq. ‘Groundwork of the Moral Law: A New Look at the Qur’ān and the Genesis of Shari’a.’ *Islamic Law and Society* (2009:16.3.4), pp. 239–279.
- 245 It was based on enlarged versions of a series of lectures he delivered at Uppsala Universitet. Goldziher speaks of being indebted to the work of Theodor Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qurāns*. Jacob Lassner, ‘Abraham Geiger: A Nineteenth-century Jewish Reformer on the Origins of Islam’ in *The Jewish Discovery of Islam: Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis*. Edited by Martin Kramer. Tel Aviv: Moshe Dayan Center, 1999, pp. 103–36.
- 246 Joseph Schacht. *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 195, p. 4 and *Idem*. ‘A Revaluation of Islamic Traditions’. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1949), pp. 143–54.
- 247 John Wansbrough. *Qur’ānic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 101.
- 248 John Wansbrough. *Qur’ānic Studies*, p. 121.
- 249 Andrew Rippin’s ‘*Tafsīr Ibn ‘Abbās*’ for his discussion of the authorship of al-Kalbī’s text, pp. 51–56.
- 250 See Claude Gilliot. ‘The Beginnings of Qur’ānic Exegesis’. In *The Qur’ān: Formative Interpretation*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Aldershot: Variorum, 1999. Pp. 1–27, p. 17.
- 251 John Wansbrough. *Qur’ānic Studies*, p. 144. And in the same vein works attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās contained elements ‘considerably posterior to the activity’ of that figure. Cf. pp. 158 *f* in which it is argued that ‘the historical processes of *tafsīr* cannot be reconstructed before the beginning of the third/ninth century.’
- 252 John Wansbrough. *Qur’ānic Studies*, pp. 217–9. In al-Suyūfī, there is a reference to the Kūfan grammarian Ibn al-Anbārī defending this practice against objections raised by a number of critics. *Itqān*, vol. 1, pp. 242–43.
- 253 Wansbrough’s theory rests on the belief that the whole of the exegetical literature from the early third/ninth century is aimed at presupposing the existence of a fixed canon. Wansbrough refers to a promotion of the exegesis of language, probing shifts in literary styles, aims, and the functional utility of the materials as a means of gauging historical fact.
- 254 The reaction to Wansbrough’s work has tended to focus on the claims made with regards to the canonization function of scripture. Similarly, there have also been studies which underline the Arabian background of the Islamic tradition in addition to those which continue to question it: see Francois de Blois, ‘Islam in its Arabian Context.’ In *The Qur’ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur’ānic Milieu*. Edited by Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx. Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 2010, pp. 615–624. *Idem*. ‘*Naṣrānī* (Ναζωραῖος) and *Ḥanīf* (ἡθνικός): Studies on the Religious Vocabulary of Christianity and Islam.’ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 2002:65, pp. 1–30. Gerald Hawting. *The Idea of Idolatry and the Emergence of Islam: From Polemic to History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Gerald. Hawting. ‘John Wansbrough, Islam, and Monotheism.’ *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* (1997:9.1), pp. 22–38. Jawid Mojaddedi.

- 'Taking Islam Seriously: The Legacy of John Wansbrough.' *Journal of Semitic Studies* (2000:45:1), pp. 103–14. Walid A. Saleh, 'The Etymological Fallacy and Qur'ānic Studies: Muḥammad, Paradise, and Late Antiquity.' In *The Qur'ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu*. Edited by Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx. Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 649–694. Nicolai Sinai, 'The Qur'ān as Process.' In *The Qur'ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu*. Edited Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx. Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 407–39. Also see Claude Gilliot, 'Reconsidering the Authorship of the Qur'ān: Is the Qur'ān Partly the Fruit of a Progressive and Collective Work?'. In *The Qur'ān in its Historical Context*, pp. 88–108. Daniel Madigan, 'Reflections on Some Current Directions in Qur'ānic Studies.' *Muslim World* (1995:85.3), pp. 345–362. Fazlur Rahman, 'Some Recent Books on the Qur'ān by Western Authors.' *The Journal of Religion* (1984:64.1), pp. 73–95. The debates about the Qur'ān and authenticity are covered in the introduction to the text.
- 255 He states that 'all that we have is what we have been told.' John Wansbrough, 'Res Ipsa Loquitur: History and Mimesis.' Reproduced in Herbert Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory*, pp. 3–19, pp. 6–7. Wansbrough made the case that historical 'fact' is not decisively determined by archival or indeed archaeological artifact, but rather, to all intents and purposes, it furtively resides in the literary countenance and features of given texts. Wansbrough's admission that the structural features and formulaic phraseology he used to identify discrete exegetical layers of scripture and their historical depth in the early Islamic source material, were in his own words, an 'experiment'. Berg argues that Wansbrough's principal contribution to the debate on Islamic origins rests with his advocating a return to critical scholarship in approaches to issues of authenticity and ascription as far as the Islamic sources are concerned. With regards to the principles of exegesis, his view was that these were perfected by the time of Ibn Qutayba and that 'thereafter few, if any, methodological innovations were introduced.'
- 256 Similar discussions were pursued in the context of theology and issues of pseudepigraphy: see Michael Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985; *Idem*, 'The Origins of Kalām.' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1980), pp. 32–43. Also reproduced in Michael Cook, *Studies in the Origins of Early Islamic Culture and Tradition*. Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate Variorum, 2004. Cf. Josef van Ess, *Anfänge muslimischer Theologie: zwie antiqadaritische Traktate aus dem ersten Jahrhundert der Hīgra*. Beirut: Texte und Studien, Bd. 14. Beirut: in Kommission bei Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1977. Josef van Ess, 'L'autorité de la tradition prophétique dans la théologie mu'tazilite.' *La notion d'autorité au Moyen Age d'Islam, Byzance, Occident: Colloques Internationaux de la Napoule*. Edited by George Makdisi, Dominique Sourdel, and Janine Sourdel-Thomine. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982. Pp. 211–226. Joseph Van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra*, and his more recent Josef Van Ess, *Der Eine und das Andere. Beobachtungen an islamischen hāresiographischen Texten*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011. Summaries of the issues are discussed in Mustafa. Shah, 2007. 'Trajectories in the Development of Islamic Theological Thought: the Synthesis of Kalām.' *Religion Compass* 2: 430–454. www.blackwell.com/religioncompass. Joseph Van Ess, 'Sūrat a-Najm and Its Relationship with Muḥammad's Mī'rāj.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (1999.1), pp. 47–62.
- 257 See François Déroche, *La Transmission écrite du Coran dans les débuts de l'islam: Le Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. Leiden; Boston: E.J. Brill, 2009. See pp. 172–79 for an English summary. The *Le Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* consists of a

number of fragments which originally belonged to an ancient Qur'ānic manuscript discovered in the mosque of 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ mosque in the old city of Fustat, the former Egyptian capital; they were brought back to France by Jean-Joseph Marcel (1776–1856) and supplemented with Qur'ānic folios also brought back from Egypt by Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville (1772–1822). Asselin's folios were acquired by the Bibliothèque royale, while Marcel's folios ventually ended up in the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg. Other related materials were in the possession of the Vatican and the David Khalili collection. The portion of the manuscript covers about 45% of the Qur'anic text and Déroche suggested that the codex originally comprised between 210–220 folios, adding that five scribes worked on the text. It is only following the recent restoration of the folios that the work could be examined. Déroche also outlines some of the physical problems with manuscripts of this nature. Cf. Adam Gacek. *Arabic Manuscripts: a Vademecum for Readers*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009.

- 258 François Déroche. *La Transmission*, p. 178. See also the work of Behnam Sadeghi. 'The Chronology of the Qur'ān: A Stylometric Research Program.' (2011:58.3.4), pp. 210–299 as well as Behnam Sadeghi; Uwe Bergmann. 'The Codex of a Companion of the Prophet and the Qur'ān of the Prophet.' *Arabica* (2012:57.4), pp. 343–436. See the review in Claude Gilliot. 'Miscellanea coranica I.' *Arabica*. (2012:59.1.2.), pp. 109–133, which looks at François Déroche's work and its implications. For other related work on codicology see François Déroche. *Islamic Codicology: An Introduction to the Study of Manuscripts in Arabic Script*, tr. Deke Dusinberre and David Radzinowicz, ed. Muhammad Isa Waley. London: al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2006). See also *Idem*. *Cercles et entrelacs: format et décor des Corans maghrébins médiévaux*. Paris: Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres, 2001. Cf. Michael Cook. 'The Stemma of the Regional Codices of the Koran.' *Graeco-Arabica*. (2004:9–10), pp. 89–104. G. R. Puin, 'Observations on Early Qur'ān Manuscripts in Ṣan'ā.' In *The Qur'ān as Text*. Edited by Stefan Wild. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996, pp. 107–11. Works which built upon the idea of a revised and reworked *ur text* include: Christoph Luxenberg. *Die syro-aramäische Lesart des Koran: Ein Beitrag zur Entschlüsselung der Koransprache*. Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 2000. And Günter Luling. *A Challenge to Islam for Reformation: the Rediscovery and Reliable Reconstruction of a Comprehensive pre-Islamic Christian Hymnal Hidden in the Koran Under Earliest Islamic Reinterpretations*. Delhi: Montilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2003. See the review by Simon Hopkins in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (2003:28), pp. 377–380. Luxenberg (a pseudonym) took the view that the lexical and syntactic structures of the Qur'ān had a Syro-Aramaic provenance and that later Islamic scholarship had invented the readings associated with its traditional transmission. Luling spoke of there being an *Ur-text* of pre-Islamic Christian strophic hymns, which were manipulated by later Islamic scholars to reflect ideological and linguistic developments.
- 259 Even in the light of recent studies of manuscript evidence, it has been argued the imposition of the consonantal skeleton (*rasm*) of the Qur'ān, around which the readings were constellated, is considerably later than the periods suggested in the 'traditional' narratives. See for example: David Powers, *Muḥammad Is Not the Father of Any of Your Men: The Making of the Last Prophet*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2009, pp. 227–8. There is a detailed refutation of the thesis advanced by Powers set forth in a Review Article by Walid Saleh in *Comparative Islamic Studies* (2010:6.1.2), pp. 251–264; also see: Gerald Hawting. Review of *Muḥammad Is Not the Father of Any of Your Men: The Making*

- of the Last Prophet.' *Islamic Law and Society* 2011 (2011.18.1) pp. 116–119. David Powers. *Studies in Qur'ān and Ḥadīth: the Formation of the Islamic Law of Inheritance*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986; and Agostino Cilardo. *The Qur'ānic Term Kalāla: Studies in Arabic Language and Poetry, Ḥadīth and Fiqh. Notes on the Origins of Islamic Law*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005. Pavel Pavlovitch. 'Some Sunni Ḥadīth on the Qur'ānic Term Kalāla An Attempt at Historical Reconstruction.' *Islamic Law and Society* (2012:19.1.2), pp. 86–159.
- 260 François Déroche. *La Transmission*, p. 178.
- 261 Angelika Neuwirth, 'Structural, Linguistic, and Literary Features.' In *Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*. Edited by Jane Dammen McAuliffe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 97–113, p. 99. Cf. *Idem*. 'Referentiality and Textuality in Surat al-Ḥijr.' Some Observations on the Qur'ānic Canonical Process and the Emergence of a Community.' In *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'ān*. Edited by Issa Boullata. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000, pp. 143–72. *Idem*. 'Structure and the Emergence of Community.' In *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005, pp. 140–158. For more of her work see Angelika Neuwirth. *Studien zur Komposition der mekkanischen Suren*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1981. *Idem*. 'Qur'ānic Literary Structure Revisited: Surat al-Raḥmān between Mythic Account and Decodation of Myth.' In *Story-telling in the Framework of Non-fictional Arabic Literature*. Edited by Stefan Leder. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998, pp. 388–420. *Idem*. 'From the Sacred Mosque to the Remote Temple: Sūrat al-Isrā' between Text and Commentary.' In *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. pp. 376–407. *Idem*. 'Qur'ān and History: a Disputed Relationship. Some Reflections on Qur'ānic History and History in the Qur'ān.' *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* (2003.5), pp. 1–18. *Idem*. 'Debating Christian and Jewish traditions. Embodied Antagonisms in Sūrat Āl 'Imrān (Q 3:1–62).' In *Studien zur Semiotik und Arabistik: Festschrift für Hartmut Bobzin zum 60. Geburtstag*. Hrsg. Otto Jastrow, Shabo Talay und Herta Hafenrichter: Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden pp. 281–303, 2008. *The Qur'ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu*. Edited by Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx. Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 2010. *Idem*. *Der Koran als Text der Spätantike: Ein europäischer Zugang*. Frankfurt am Main: Verlag der Weltreligionen, 2011, pp. 548–60.
- 262 And much of her research has been about identifying, analyzing, and 'reclaiming' this ancient pre-redactional Qur'ān through reference to self-referentiality and textuality. Angelika Neuwirth, 'Structural, Linguistic, and Literary Features.' p. 99 *f*. Also prominent in the discussions is Neuwirth's reference to an earlier oral phase in which the lectionary (Qur'ān) is in the ascendancy and a later phase in which the *kitāb* (p. 101) comes to define the canonical ensemble of texts. See also Daniel Madigan, *The Qur'ān's Self-Image: Writing and Authority in Islam's Scripture*. Princeton: Darwin Press, 2003. For more on the oral delivery of the text see William Graham. 'Qur'ān as Spoken Word: an Islamic Contribution to the Understanding of Scripture.' In *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*. Edited by Richard Martin. University of Arizona Press, 1985, pp. 23–40; Kristina Nelson. *The Art of Reciting the Qur'ān*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984. Fred Denny. 'Exegesis and Recitation: Their Development as Classical Forms of Qur'ānic Piety.' In *Transitions and Transformations in the History of Religion: Essays in Honour of Joseph M. Kitagawa*. Edited by F. Reynolds & T. Ludwig. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980, pp. 91–123. For a classical

- treatment see al-Ghāfiqī, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wāhid. *Kitāb lamaḥāt al-anwār wa-nafaḥāt al-azhār wa-riyy al-ḥam’ān li-ma’rifat ma warada min al-āthār fī thawāb qārī’ al-Qur’ān*, cited above f/n 9. See Neuwirth’s article ‘Form and Structure of the Qur’ān’. In the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur’ān*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002, vol. 2 (E–I), pp. 245–66.
- 263 Rippin’s comments were made back in 1982: Andrew Rippin. ‘The Present Status of *Tafsīr* Studies.’ *The Muslim World* (1982:72), pp. 224–238, p. 228. This is taken up further in Rippin’s study of the *naskh* text attributed to al-Zuhrī (see below). However, Rippin does acknowledge that Sezgin’s work draws attention to ‘a substantial body of material coming from at least the second and third centuries.’ (p. 228).
- 264 Gregor Schoeler. *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, p. 29; Stephen Shoemaker. ‘In Search of ‘Urwa’s Sīra: Some Methodological Issues in the Quest for ‘Authenticity’ in the Life of Muḥammad.’ *Der Islam* (2011:85), pp. 257–344.
- 265 Gregor Schoeler. *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, p. 29. Gregor Schoeler. ‘The Codification of the Qur’an: A Comment on the Hypotheses of Burton and Wansbrough.’ In *The Qur’ān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur’ānic Milieu*. Edited by Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx, Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 779–794.
- 266 Gregor Schoeler. *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, p. 29. Schoeler did suggest that the aversion to reliance on the written word alone was also a factor in play: ‘Do not take knowledge from the *ṣaḥāfiyyīn*’; and, ‘a *ṣaḥafī* should not be allowed to issue edicts for people, nor should a *muṣḥafī* teach them readings (*qirā’a*)’ are viewed as dicta comprising examples of this attitude; moreover, he pointed to analogues within the context of the prohibition to writing down Prophetic *ḥadīth*. For more on issues of transmission see Joseph Kister, ‘*Lā taqrā’ū ‘l-Qur’āna ‘alā muṣḥafīyyīn wa-lā taḥmilū ‘l-‘ilma ‘anī l-ṣaḥāfiyyīn*: Some Notes on the Transmission of Ḥadīth.’ *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (1998:22), pp. 127–62.
- 267 Gregor Schoeler. *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, p. 33. It would be argued that scholars did not leave ‘behind or edit books in the sense of final, revised redactions of their material.’ One issue which remains unresolved within the context of the framework suggested by Schoeler is the fact that the biographical traditions and materials, upon which Schoeler often relied, do speak of fixed texts being bequeathed and written.
- 268 Gregor Schoeler. *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, pp. 28–31, 36–9, and 43. Wansbrough commented that ‘despite careful and often illuminating analysis of technical terminology, the studies of both authors (*Abbott* and *Sezgin*) suffer, in my opinion, from an ingenuous acceptance of the *isnād* apparatus, but represent at the same time a not altogether unexpected reaction to the work of Goldziher and Schacht.’ John Wansbrough. *Qur’ānic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation*, p. 140.
- 269 Gregor Schoeler. *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, p. 47.
- 270 It was assumed that Dionysus Thrax’s *Téchnē grammatikē* in its Syriac form played a part in the formation of Arabic grammatical models. Despite moving away from the Greek hypothesis, Versteegh did continue to uphold the notion of *voie diffuse*, which predicates that the local living tradition of Hellenistic enlightenment had filtered through to influence the Arabs’ cultural ideas and the manner in which these were expressed. Notwithstanding Syria, Versteegh singled out indigenous regions such as Ḥarrān, Nisibis, Hīra, and Edessa, as being locations where Hellenistic cultural ideas prevailed. (see his ‘Origin of *Qiyās*, p. 12:

- Kees Versteegh, 'The Origin of the Term *Qiyās* in Arabic Grammar'. *Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik* (1981:4), pp. 7–30). With regards to translations it was claimed a figure such as Sībawayhi had not only been aware of logical definitions of language introduced in Aristotle's works, but his own formulation of analogous concepts was shaped by them. Parts of the *Organon* were translated by Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. 139/757), namely the *Categories*, the *Hermeneutics* and the *Prior Analytics*. Cf. Rafael Talmon. 'Gāya, Šifa and al-Kalām al-Wāšif in Ibn Muqaffa's Manual of Logic: New Considerations about the Beginning of Arabic Grammar.' *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (2005:30), pp. 506–20. See also Sebastian Brock. 'The Syriac Commentary Tradition.' In *Glosses and Commentaries on Aristotelian Logical Texts: The Syriac, Arabic and Medieval Latin Traditions*. Edited by Charles Burnett. Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts 23. London: Warburg Institute / University of London, 1993, pp. 3–18; and *Idem*. 'Syriac Translations of Greek Popular Philosophy.' In *Von Athen nach Bagdad. Zur Rezeption griechischer Philosophie von der Spätantike bis zum Islam*. Edited by P. Bruns. Bonn: Borengässer, 2003, pp. 9–28. One of the first architects of this thesis was Adalbert Merx, whose *Historia artis grammaticae apud Syros. Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 1889, was influential in shaping views. A staunch defender of this view was Frithiof Rundgren, a renowned Arabist. In an article entitled 'On the Greek Influence on Arabic Grammar.' Translated from the German; Rundgren adopted the view that tripartite division of speech, with which the *Kitāb* commences, had a Greek origin and that this was true for other grammatical definitions in the *Kitāb*. Cf. Ramzi. Baalbaki, *The Legacy of the Kitāb: Sībawayhi's Analytical Methods within the Context of the Arabic Grammatical Theory*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2008.
- 271 See: Kees Versteegh. *Arabic Grammar and Qur'ānic Exegesis in Early Islam*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993, p. 200 f.
- 272 Kees Versteegh. *Arabic Grammar and Qur'ānic Exegesis in Early Islam*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993, p. 178 and p. 180.
- 273 Kees Versteegh. 'Grammar and Exegesis: The Origins of Kūfan Grammar and the *Tafsīr Muqātil*.' *Der Islam* (1990:67:2), pp. 206–42. See pp. 238–9. In Kees Versteegh. *Arabic Grammar and Qur'ānic Exegesis*, the point is made that the text of Kalbī precedes 'the emergence of grammar as we know it', p. 115. See Muḥammad al-Kalbī *Tafsīr*. Ms. Chester Beatty, no. 4224.
- 274 This has been a theme in the work of Uri Rubin.
- 275 In a related context see for example Patricia Crone 'Two Legal Problems Bearing on the Early History of the Qur'ān.' *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (1994:18), pp. 1–37, pp. 1–2. And more generally Patricia Crone. 'How Did the Qur'ānic Pagans Make a Living?' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (2005:68), pp. 387–99. Patricia Crone. 'The Religion of the Qur'ānic Pagans: God and the Lesser Deities.' *Arabica* (2012:57.2.3), pp. 151–200. She argues that the legal discussions on the import of '*kalāla*, *kitāb* in Q.24:33, were unintelligible to the early commentators, as were several non-legal phrases and passages (*al-ṣamad*, possibly *al-raḥīm*, the mysterious letters and *Surat Quraysh*).' In the former article she concludes that only an abandonment of 'the conventional account of how the Qur'ān was born' would explain why this was so. For an alternative explanation of the genesis of the traditional sciences see John Burton. 'Qur'ān and Sunnah, a Case of Cultural Disjunction.' In *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*. Edited by Herbert Berg. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2003, pp. 137–157.
- 276 Patricia Crone 'Two Legal Problems, p. 2. John Burton 'Law and Exegesis: the Penalty for Adultery in Islam.' *Approaches to the Qur'ān*, pp. 269–284. Arthur

- Jeffery. *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān*. Leiden: Brill, 2006 (reprint of 1938 edi.) (Includes a Preface by Gerhard Böwering and Jane Dammen McAuliffe).
- 277 Fred Donner. 'The Historical Context'. In *Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*, pp. 23–39. *Idem*. The Qur'ān in Recent Scholarship: Challenges and Desiderata.' In *The Qur'ān in its Historical Context*. pp. 29–50, 2008. *Idem*. *Muḥammad and the Believers*. Cambridge Massachusetts; London: Harvard University Press: 2010.
- 278 Andrew Rippin, 'Literary Analysis of *Qur'ān*, *tafsīr*, and *sīra*: the Methodologies of John Wansbrough.' In *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*. Edited by R. C. Martin, Tucson 1985, pp. 151–163. Marco Schöller. 'Sīra and *tafsīr*: Muḥammad al-Kalbī on the Jews of Medina.' In *The Biography of Muḥammad the Issue of the Sources*. Edited by Harald Motzki. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000, pp. 18–48. Gregor Schoeler. *The Biography of Muhammed: Nature and Authenticity*. Translated by Uwe Vagelpohl. Edited by James E. Montgomery. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011. 'Abd al-Malik ibn Hishām. *al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya* (Recension of Muḥammad ibn Ishāq's Sīra. 2 vols. Edited by Ṭaha 'Abd al-Ra'ūf. Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, N.D. al-Suhaylī, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Abd Allāh (d. 581/1185). *Rawḍ al-unūf fī tafsīr al-sīra al-nabawiyya li-Ibn Hishām*. 4 vols. Edited by Ṭaha 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Sa'd. Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyā al-Azhariyya, 1971–2. Gregor Schoeler. 'Reconstructing the Earliest *sīra* Texts: the *Hijra* in the Corpus of 'Urwa ibn Zubayr.' *Der Islam* (2005:82), pp. 209–220. Uri Rubin. *The Eye of the Beholder: the Life of Muḥammad as Viewed by the Early Muslims: a Textual Analysis*. Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995. Wim Raven. 'The Biography of the Prophet and its Scriptural Basis.' In *Story-telling in the Framework of Non-Fictional Arabic Literature*. Edited by Stefan Leder. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, Verlag, 1998, pp. 421–31. Hugh Kennedy. 'From Oral Tradition to Written Record in Arabic Genealogy.' *Arabica* (1997:44.4), pp. 531–544. Fred Leemhuis. 'Discussion and Debate in Early Commentaries of the Qur'ān.' *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. pp. 320–328. Andreas Görke. 'Prospects and Limits in the Study of the Historical Muḥammad.' Edited by Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, Kees Versteegh and Joas Wagemakers. *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki*, Leiden, Boston: Brill 2011, pp. 137–151. Sebastian Brock. 'Syriac Views of Emergent Islam.' In *Studies on the First Century of Islam*. Edited by G. H. A. Juynboll. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982, pp. 9–21. f/n 199–203.
- 279 Gabriel Reynolds. *The Qur'ān and its Biblical Subtext*. London: Routledge, 2010, pp. 3–22, especially p. 19 and pp. 20–22 and see the review of this work by Angelika Neuwirth in the *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2012:14.1), pp. 131–38; and *Idem*. 'Orientalism in Oriental Studies: Qur'ānic Studies as a Case in Point.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2007:9.2), pp. 115–27. See also the review by Amidu Sanni in the *Journal of Islamic Studies* (2012), pp. 359–64. Reynold's view is that the *mufasssīrūn* are not reliable preservers of an unbroken chain of Qur'ānic interpretation. He argues that in seeking to locate the apposite historical context to understanding the Qur'ān, he is not concerned with the issue of the canonical emergence of the text, but rather it is how this text 'of the Qur'ān might best be read,' p. 13. Reynolds states that the *tafsīr* materials represent a 'remarkable literary achievement' to be appreciated in their own right; and in this regard he speaks of the creativity and virtuosity of the *mufasssīrūn* in shaping' the Qur'ān's narratives (p. 228). His view is that 'the Qur'ān is in conversation with a larger literary tradition', p. 36. However, he claims that these *tafsīrs* 'do not preserve

- the Qur'ān's ancient meaning, and to insist otherwise does a disservice both to *tafsīr* and to the Qur'ān,' p. 19; and also pp. 257 *f.* Reynolds ironically speaks of Brill's *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān* actually being the *Encyclopaedia of tafsīr* (loc. cit.). Mention is also made of the importance of the connection between the Qur'ān and the Christian homiletic tradition (p. 246). Cf. Kevin Van Bladel, 'The Alexander Legend in the Qur'ān 18:83–102,' *The Qur'ān in its Historical Context*. Edited by Gabriel Said Reynolds: Routledge, London and New York pp. 175–203, 2008. *Idem*. 'Heavenly Cords and Prophetic Authority in the Qur'ān and its Late Antique Context'. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (2007:70.2), pp. 223–246. Also see Suleiman Ali Mourad, 'On the Qur'ānic Stories about Mary and Jesus' *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies* (1999:1.2), pp. 13–24.
- 280 The issue of the quest for distinctiveness is developed by Todd Lawson in his treatment of the Islamic narratives on the crucifixion; the doctrine is viewed as a reflection of a 'communal desideratum to show just how distinctive, in a sectarian milieu, this new religion was.' Todd Lawson. *The Crucifixion and the Qur'ān: A Study in the History of Muslim Thought*. Oxford: One World Publications, 2009, p. 20. See the review of this in *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* (2010:12), pp. 191–203.
- 281 It should be noted here that although Colin Turner's Qur'ān collection in the same series did include a confined number of articles which covered aspects of *tafsīr*, it was principally concerned with general treatments and studies of the Qur'ān; whereas, this collection seeks to broach the Qur'ān extensively through the classical discipline of *tafsīr* with regards to academic scholarship which probes the development of early *tafsīr*; concepts and hermeneutics; medieval exegetes and their works; themes and genres of classical exegesis; and aspects of modern approaches to the text.
- 282 Claude Gilliot, 'Exegesis of the Qur'ān: Classical and Medieval.' In *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, Edited by J. McAuliffe, 5 vols. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001–6, vol. II, pp. 99–124. For coverage of the modern period it is worth consulting the entry in the same edition by Rotraud Wielandt 'Exegesis of the Qur'ān: Early, Modern and Contemporary', vol. II, pp. 124–142. This Collection has generally focused on the materials of the early and medieval periods. A Collection devoted to the scholarship of modern *tafsīr* would be an excellent complement. Gilliot's work on the various expressions of the early and classical *tafsīr* tradition is immense. Claude Gilliot, 'Kontinuität und Wandel in der „Klassischen“ islamischen Koranlegung (II.VII.-XII./XIX. jh.).' *Der Islam* (2010), pp. 1–155, provides an extensive overview of the early and classical literature of *tafsīr*. *Idem*. 'Exégèse et sémantique institutionnelle dans le commentaire de Ṭabarī.' *Studia Islamica* (1993:77), pp. 41–94. Claude Gilliot. 'Coran 17, Isra', 1 dans la recherche occidentale. De la critique des traditions au Coran comme texte.' In *Le voyage initiatique en terre d'islam. Ascensions célestes et itinéraires spirituels / sous la dir. de Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi*. Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes: Section des Sciences Religieuses, 103. Leuven: Peeters, 1996, pp. 1–26. *Ibid*. 'L'exégèse coranique: bilan partiel d'une décennie.' *Studia Islamica*. (1997:85), pp. 155–162. *Idem*. L'exégèse du Coran en Asie Centrale et au Khorasan. *Studia Islamica*, No. 89 (1999), pp. 129–164. *Ibid*. 'De l'impossible censure du récit légendaire: *Adab et tafsīr* deux voies pour édifier l'*ethos* de l'*homo islamicus*.' *Israel Oriental Studies* 19 (1999): pp. 49–96. *Idem*. 'Les sciences coraniques chez les Karrāmites du Khorasan: Le livre des fondations.' *Journal Asiatique* (2000:288.1), pp. 15–81. And the forthcoming *Idem*. 'A Schoolmaster, Storyteller, Exegete and Warrior at work in Khurāsān: al-Ḍaḥḥāk b.Muzāḥim al-Hilālī (d.

- 106/*inc.* 29 May 724).’ In *The Aims and Methods of Qur’ānic Exegesis (8th–15th centuries)*. Edited by Karen Bauer. Oxford: Oxford University Press/Institute of Ismaili Studies, forthcoming.
- 283 Fred Leemhuis. ‘Origins and Early Development of the *tafsīr* Tradition. In *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur’ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 13–30. (Chapter 2 in the Collection). Georg Stauth. *Die Überlieferung des Korankommentars Muğāhid b. Ġabr’s. Zur Frage der Rekonstruktion der in den Sammelwerken des 3. Jh. d. H. benutzten frühislamischen Quellenwerke*. PhD dissertation, Universität Giessen, 1969. Fred Leemhuis. ‘Ms 1075 *tafsīr* of the Cairene Dār al-Kutub and Muğāhid’s *tafsīr*.’ In *Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*. Edited by R. Peters. Leiden: Brill, 1981, pp. 169–80. Cf. Fred Leemhuis. ‘Discussion and Debate in Early Commentaries of the Qur’ān.’ In *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, pp. 320–328.
- 284 Dimitry Frolow. ‘Ibn al-Nadīm on the History of Qur’ānic exegesis.’ *Wiener Zeitschrift fuer die Kunde des Morgenlandes* (1997:87), pp. 65–81. Cf. Devin Stewart. ‘The Structure of the *Fihrist*: Ibn al-Nadīm as Historian of Islamic Legal and Theological Schools.’ *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (2007:39.3), pp. 369–387.
- 285 Bruce Fudge. ‘Qur’ānic Exegesis in Medieval Islam and Modern Orientalism’. *Die Welt des Islams* (2006:46.2), pp. 115–147. *Idem*. ‘Signs of Scripture in “The City of Brass”.’ *Journal of Qur’ānic Studies* (2006:8.1), pp. 88–118. *Idem*. ‘The Men of the Cave: *tafsīr*, Tragedy and Tawfiq al-Ḥakīm.’ *Arabica: Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* (2007:54.1), pp. 67–93.
- 286 A. Rezvan, ‘The Qur’ān and its World: IX. The Triumph of Diversity: Muslim Exegesis’. *Manuscripta Orientalia* (1999:5.2), pp. 37–57.
- 287 Claude Gilliot. ‘The Beginnings of Qur’ānic Exegesis. In *The Qur’ān: Formative Interpretation*, pp. 1–27.
- 288 Kees Versteegh. ‘Grammar and Exegesis: The Origins of Kūfan Grammar and the *tafsīr Muqātil*.’ *Der Islam* (1990:67.2), pp. 206–42. The thesis was fleshed out with greater vigour in Kees Versteegh. *Arabic Grammar and Qur’ānic Exegesis in Early Islam*. Cf. the review by Rafael. Talmon, ‘Review of *Arabic Grammar and Qur’ānic Exegesis in Early Islam*’ by Kees Versteegh. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (1996:20), pp. 287–292. Kees Versteegh. ‘Freedom of the Speaker?: The term *Ittisā’* and Related Notions in Arabic Grammar.’ In *Studies in the History of Arabic Grammar II*. Edited by Michael Carter and Kees Versteegh. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1990, pp. 281–93. *Idem*. ‘Three is a Crowd; Lawyers and Linguists on Qur’ān 4/11.’ *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* (1993:23), pp. 302–15. Kees Versteegh. ‘Linguistic Attitudes and the Origin of Speech in the Arab World.’ In *Understanding Arabic: Essays in Contemporary Arabic Linguistics in Honor of El-Said Badawi*. Edited by Alaa El-Gibali. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1996, pp. 15–31. Kees Versteegh. *The Arabic Language*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001. Translations from seminal linguistic texts are provided in Kees Versteegh. *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought III: the Arabic Linguistic Tradition*, London, New York: Routledge, 1997.
- 289 Kees Versteegh. ‘Zayd ibn ‘Alī’s Commentary on the Qur’ān.’ In *Arabic Grammar and Linguistics*. Edited by Yasir Suleiman. Richmond: Curzon, 1999, pp. 9–29.
- 290 Andrew Rippin. ‘Studying Early *Tafsīr* Texts’. *Miszellen: Der Islam* (1995:72), pp. 310–23.

- 291 Andrew Rippin. 'Al-Zuhri, *Naskh al-Qur'ān* and the Problem of Early *tafsir* Texts.' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1984:47.8), pp. 22–43. Cf. al-Zuhri, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn Shihāb. *Al-Nāsikh wa'l-mansūkh fī'l-Qur'ān al-karīm*. Edited by Muṣṭafā Maḥmūd al-Azharī. Cairo: Dār Ibn 'Affān; Dār ibn al-Qayyim, 2008. See also Andrew Rippin's earlier study of the *gharīb* and *luḡat* texts attributed to Ibn 'Abbās: Ibn 'Abbās's *al-Luḡāt fī'l-Qur'ān*. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1981:44), pp. 15–25; and Ibn 'Abbās's *Gharīb al-Qur'ān*. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1983: 46), pp. 332–3. *Idem*. 'Qur'ān 21.95: "A Ban is Upon Any Town."' *Journal of Semitic Studies* (1979:24), pp. 43–53. *Idem*. 'Qur'ān 7.40: "Until the Camel Passes through the Eye of the Needle."' *Arabica* (1980:27.2), pp. 107–113. *Idem*. 'The *Qur'ān* as Literature: Perils, Pitfalls and Prospects.' *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies Bulletin* (1983:10), pp. 38–47. *Idem*. 'The Present Status of *tafsir* Studies.' *Muslim World* (1982:72), pp. 224–238; *Idem*. 'The Present Status of *tafsir* Studies.' *Hamdard Islamicus* (1983:6.4), pp. 17–31. *Idem*. 'Lexicographical Texts and the Qur'ān'. In *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 158–74. *Idem*. 'RHMNN and the Ḥanīfs.' In *Islamic Studies Presented to Charles J. Adams*. Edited by Wael B. Hallaq and Donald P. Little. Leiden: E.J. Brill, pp. 153–68. *Idem*. 'The Poetics of Qur'anic Punning.' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1994:57), pp. 193–207. *Idem*. 'Abū 'Ubayd's *Kitāb al-Nāsikh wa'l-mansūkh*. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1990:53), pp. 319–20. *Idem*. 'Studying Early *Tafsir* Texts., Miszellen: *Der Islam* (1995:72), pp. 310–23. Andrew Rippin. 'The Commerce of Eschatology' *The Qur'ān as Text*. Edited by Stefan Wild (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Sciences: Texts and Studies, XXVII). Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1996, pp. 125–135. *Idem*. 'The Designation of "Foreign" Languages in the Exegesis of the Qur'ān.' In *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, pp. 437–443. *Idem*. 'The Exegetical Literature of Abrogation: Form and Content' *Studies in Islamic and Middle Eastern Texts and Traditions in Memory of Norman Calder*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 213–31. *Idem*. 'The Muslim Samson: Medieval, Modern and Scholarly Interpretations.' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (2008:71.2), pp. 239–253. *Idem*. *The Islamic World*. London, New York: Routledge, 2008. *Idem*. 'Syriac in the Qur'ān: Classical Muslim Theories.' In *The Qur'ān in its Historical Context*, pp. 249–261. Many of the articles feature in Andrew Rippin. *The Qur'ān and its Interpretive Tradition*. Aldershot: Ashgate, Variorum, 2000.
- 292 Josef van Ess. *Ungenützte Texte zur Karrāmīya. Eine Materialsammlung*. Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Jahrgang 6. Abhandlung. Heidelberg, 1980.
- 293 There is an interesting parallel here: namely, Wansbrough's argument about the authenticity of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī's *Risāla fī'l-qadar* and his view that the text had its origins in the late eighth century. Wansbrough reasoned that the epistle's failure to include Prophetic traditions was not an indication of its early origin but a reflection of the debate within Islam about the authority of sources: *uṣūl*. And the epistle's aims were to promote the independent authority of the Qur'ān to the exclusion of the Prophetic traditions. For more on this see: John Wansbrough, *Qur'anic Studies*, pp. 91–2 and pp. 160–3 and also see Suleiman Ali Mourad. *Early Islam between Myth and History: Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110H/728CE) and the Formation of his Legacy in Classical Islamic Scholarship*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2006 in which Mourad explains how pseudepigraphy,

- author transfer, and back projection were used to inflate the biography of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Also see the Review Article by Mustafa Shah in *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2009:11.2), pp. 93–119. Equally, if one takes on board Walid Saleh's synopsis of the misleading character of the *tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr* discussions, then the issue of appealing to authority is academic in the loose sense of the word.
- 294 Harald Motzki. 'Dating the So-Called *Tafsīr Ibn Abbas*: Some Additional Remarks'. *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (2006:31), pp. 147–163. The author has updated the bibliography for the article.
- 295 Herbert Berg. 'Ibn 'Abbās in 'Abbasid-Era *tafsīr*.' In *Occasional Papers of the School of 'Abbasid Studies, Cambridge 6–10 July 2002*. Edited by James Montgomery. *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*. Paris: Peeters, 2004, pp. 129–146. *Idem*. 'The *Isnād* and the Production of Cultural Memory: Ibn 'Abbās as a Case Study.' *Numen* (2011:58.2.3), pp. 259–283. *Idem*. 'Elijah Muhammad and the Qur'ān: the Evolution of his *tafsīr*.' *Muslim World* (1999:89.1), pp. 42–55, 1999. *Idem*. Ṭabarī's Exegesis of the Qur'ānic term *al-Kitāb*.' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (1995:63.4), pp. 761–774. And in his 2000 publication: *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: the Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*. London: Curzon Press, 1999. *Idem*. 'Weaknesses in the Arguments for the Early Dating of Qur'ānic Commentary.' In *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, pp. 329–345.
- 296 Harald Motzki. 'The Origins of Muslim Exegesis. A Debate.' In *Analysing Muslim Traditions Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghāzī Ḥadīth*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2010. Edited by Harald Motzki with Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort and Sean Anthony. pp. 231–303. It should be noted that the chapter was originally written in 2003 as a journal article; however, because of its length, it was never published as such, until it was printed in the aforementioned work, along with five other pieces by Motzki and articles by Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort and Sean Anthony respectively.
- 297 Motzki zooms in on the arguments developed in Herbert Berg's 'Competing Paradigms in the Study of Islamic Origins: Qur'ān 15:89–91 and the Value of *isnāds*.' pp. 259–290, in *Method and Theory*. Berg had concluded that a consensus among the different camps with regards to the historical value of *ḥadīths* and *isnāds* would never be reached.
- 298 John Wansbrough. '*Majāz al-Qur'ān*: Periphrastic Exegesis.' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1970:33), pp. 247–266. See also John Wansbrough. 'Arabic Rhetoric and Qur'ānic Exegesis', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1968:31), pp. 469–85. Elsewhere, I have pointed out that Wansbrough postulates that in the estimation of grammarians the 'restored text (*muqaddar*) was at least as valid as its original articulation (*malfūz*)' and thus the activities of these grammarians intimate an equivalence between exegesis and emendation. Such a conclusion would have been influential in his refuting the existence of a canonical *ne varietur* text. (Q.S. p. 225). See review article of Rippin's *Formative Interpretation*, in *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2004:6.1), pp. 135–52. See also Kees Versteegh. 'Freedom of the Speaker?' pp. 281–93.
- 299 Wolfhart Heinrichs. 'Contacts between Scriptural Hermeneutics and Literary Theory in Islam: the Case of *Majāz*.' *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften/Majallat Ta'rīkh al-'Ulūm al-'Arabiyya wa'l-Islamiyya* (1992:7), pp. 253–284. This was previously tackled in *Idem*, 'On the Genesis of the *ḥaqīqa majāz* Dichotomy', *Studia Islamica* 59 (1984), pp. 111–140. Cf. Review Article of Ella Almagor. 'The Early Meaning of *Majāz* and the Nature of

- Abū 'Ubayda's Exegesis.' In *Studia Orientalia Memoriae D. H. Baneth Dedicata*. Edited by S. Shaked, Joseph L. Blau, Shlomo Pines, and M. J. Kister, 307–326. Jerusalem: Magnes, 1979. Kamāl Abū-Deeb, 'Studies in the *majāz* and Metaphorical Language of the Qur'ān: Abū 'Ubayda and al-Sharīf al-Raḍī.' In *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'ān*. London: Curzon Press, 2000. Edited by Issa Boullata, pp. 310–353. Mustafa Shah, 'The Philological Endeavours of the Early Arabic Linguists: Theological Implications of the *tawqīf-iṣṭilāḥ* Antithesis and the *majāz* Controversy.' (Part II) *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (2000:2), pp. 44–66. Kees Versteegh, 'Linguistic Attitudes and the Origin of Speech in the Arab World', in Alaa El-Gibali. *Understanding Arabic: Essays in Contemporary Arabic Linguistics in Honor of El-Said Badawi*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1996. Pp. 15–31. Mustafa Shah, 'Classical Islamic Discourse on the Origins of Language: Cultural Memory and the Defense of Orthodoxy'. *Numen: International Review for the History of Religions*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2011. (2011:58.2/3), pp. 314–43. Daniel Gimaret. *Les noms divins en Islam: exégèse lexicographique et théologique*. Paris: Cerf. 1988. Wolfhart Heinrichs, 'The Classification of the Sciences and the Consolidation of Philology in Classical Islam,' in J. W. Drijvers, A. A. MacDonald (eds), *Centres of Learning: Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, (1995) pp. 119–139. Kees Versteegh. *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought III: the Arabic Linguistic Tradition*, London, New York: Routledge, 1997. The debates can be viewed in Ibn Jinnī, Abū'l-Faṭḥ 'Uthmān. *Al-Khaṣā'is*. Edited by Muḥammad 'Alī al-Najjar. 3 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1952–5, vol. 1, pp. 40–49.
- 300 Haggai Ben-Shammai. 'The Status of Parable and Simile in the Qur'ān and early *tafsīr*: Polemic, Exegetical and Theological Aspects.' *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (2005:30), pp. 154–169.
- 301 Issa J. Boullata. 'Poetry Citation as Interpretive Illustration in Qur'ān Exegesis: *Masā'il Nāfi' Ibn al-Azraq*.' In *Studies Presented to Charles J. Adams*. Edited by Wael Hallaq and Donald Little. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991, pp. 27–40. Ibn al-Anbārī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim. *Kitāb iḍāḥ al-waḥf wa'l-ibtidā'*. Edited by Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ramaḍān. 2 vols. Damascus: Majma' al-Lughā al-'Arabiyya, 1971. Ibn al-Anbārī, Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim. *Kitāb al-aḍḍād*. Edited by Muḥammad Abū'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm. Beirut, Sidon: al-Maktabat al-'Aṣriyya, 1987. Cf. the arguments about the primacy of the Qurayshī dialect in the introduction to: Ibn Fāris, Abū 'l-Husayn Aḥmad b. Zakariyyā'. n.d. *al-Ṣāhibī fī fiqh al-lughā 'l-'arabiyya wa-sunan al-'Arab fī kalāmihā*. Edited by Aḥmad Ṣaqr. Cairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya. Many of these topics are discussed by Lothar Kopf in 'Religious Influences on Medieval Arabic Philology.' *Studia Islamica* (1956:5): 33–59. Also see James Montgomery. 'Sundry Observations on the Fate of Poetry in the Early Islamic Period.' In Jack Smart. *Tradition and Modernity in Arabic Language and Literature*. Richmond: Curzon, 1996, pp. 49–60.
- 302 John Wansbrough, *Qur'ānic Studies*, pp. 216–17.
- 303 al-Naysābūrī, al-Hasan ibn Muḥammad. *Tafsīr gharā'ib al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 6.
- 304 Leah Kinberg. '*Muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* (Koran 3/7): Implications of a Koranic Pair of Terms in Medieval Exegesis.' *Arabica* (1988:35), pp. 143–72. Jane McAuliffe. 'Text and Textuality: Q.3:7 as a Point of Intersection.' Published in *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'ān*. Edited by I. J. Boullata. London: Curzon Press, 2000, pp. 56–76. Stefan Wild. 'The Self-Referentiality of the Qur'ān: Sūra 3:7 as an Exegetical Challenge. In *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*,

- pp. 422–36. M. Lagarde. ‘De l’ambiguité (mutashabih) dans le Coran: tentatives d’explication des esegètes musulmans.’ *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* (1985:3), pp. 45–62.
- 305 See Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der islamischen Koranauslegung*, p. 58. ‘Es fand sich eine Menge neugieriger Schriftgelehrter, die die Luecken des Korans aus dem Verkehr mit Juden und Christen ausfüllten und die von ihnen erhaltenen, oft in sehr missverstandener Weise wiedergegebenen Erzählungen noch aus eigener Phantasie ergänzten und als Erklärungen des Korans preisgaben.’ He is speaking of the interest in legendary tales and materials from Christian and Jewish sources which were used by scholars to embellish the Qur’ān’s narrative.
- 306 Harris Birkeland. ‘Old Muslim Opposition Against Interpretation of the Qur’ān.’ *Avhandlinger Utgitt av De Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo*, II. Hist. Filos. Klasse 1. Oslo: 1955. Birkeland also includes a study of the dictum in which Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal declared his aversion to *tafsīr*, *malāḥim*, and *maghāzī*, pp. 9–18. Cf. Nabia Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri II, Qur’ānic Commentary*, pp. 106–112.
- 307 A parallel here is provided perhaps by the arguments about the opposition to writing down traditions and the arguments put forward by Gregor Schoeler and Michael Cook. When Schoeler referred to the Umayyads’ opposition to the writing down of traditions, Cook countered by stating that the position taken by Schoeler assumes that the reports are authentic. Cf. Wansbrough, *Qur’ānic Studies*, pp. 158–60. This is also an argument used by Rippin to question Versteegh’s study of early exegetical texts: namely, how can one draw conclusions of an historical nature about the content of literary materials and concepts, when the very texts used to formulate and construct such assumptions have a problematic provenance? While the counter view is that the sophistication of the texts is overlooked by the focus on issues of historicity.
- 308 Leah Kinberg. ‘*Muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* (Koran 3/7): Implications of a Koranic Pair of Terms in Medieval Exegesis’. *Arabica* (1988:35), pp. 143–72.
- 309 Muhammad Abul Quasem. ‘Al-Ghazālī’s Theory of Qur’ān Exegesis According to One’s Personal Opinion.’ pp. 69–91. International Congress for the Study of the Qur’ān, Australian National University, Canberra, 8–13 May, 1981. Canberra: Australian National University, 1981.
- 310 Mesut Okumuş. ‘The Influence of Ibn Sīnā on al-Ghazzālī in Qur’ānic Hermeneutics.’ *The Muslim World* (2012:102.2.1), pp. 390–411. See also his ‘The Influence of al-Ghazzālī on the Hermeneutics of Ibn Rushd.’ *Der Islam* (2011:86.2), pp. 286–311. Cf. Richard Frank. *Al-Ghazālī and the Ash‘arite School*. cited above. Also see Jules Janssens. ‘Al-Ghazālī between Philosophy (*Falsafa*) and Sufism (*Tasawwuf*): His Complex Attitude in the *Marvels of the Heart* (*‘Ajā’ib al-Qalb*) of the *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*. *Muslim World* (2011:101.4), pp. 614–632. Richard Frank. *Creation and the Cosmic System: al-Ghazālī and Avicenna*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, Universitätsverlag, 1992. *Idem*. ‘Ghazālī’s Use of Avicenna’s Philosophy.’ *Revue des Etudes Islamiques* 57 (1989), pp. 274–75. Robert Wisnovsky. ‘One Aspect of the Avicennian Turn in Sunnī Theology.’ *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* (2004:14.1), pp. 65–100. Ibn Rushd, al-Qāḍī Abū l-Walīd. *Kashf Manāḥij al-adilla*. Edited by Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Jābirī. 4th edn. Beirut: Markaz Dirāsāt al-Wahda al-‘Arabiyya: 2001, pp. 150–152.
- 311 Ulrika Mårtensson. ‘Through the Lens of Modern Hermeneutics: Authorial Intention in al-Ṭabarī’s and al-Ghazālī’s Interpretation of Q. 24:35.’ *Journal of Qur’ānic Studies* (2009:2), pp. 20–48. See E.D. Hirsch. *The Aims of Interpretation*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976. And his *Validity in Interpretation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and*

- Method*. Translation revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall. London: Continuum, 2006. Many of Mårtensson's observations are referenced to the historical origins of Ash'arism and the extent of its medieval influence.
- 312 Kees Versteegh. 'The Linguistic Introduction to *Rāzī's Tafsīr*.' *Studies on Near East Languages and Literatures. Memorial Volume Karel Patracek*. Edited by Petr Vavrousek and Petr Zemanek. Prague: Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, BCS Printing, 1996, pp. 589–603. Cf. George Makdisi. 'The Juridical Theology of Shāfi'ī: Origins and Significance of *uṣūl al-fiqh*.' *Studia Islamica* (1984:59), pp. 5–47; and Richard Frank. 'Elements in the Development of the Teaching of al-Ash'arī.' *Le Muséon: Revue D'Études Orientales* 104 (1991:104), pp. 141–190.
- 313 Hartmut Bobzin. 'Notes on the Importance of Variant Readings and Grammar in the *Tafsīr al-Galālayn*.' *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik ZAL* (1985:15), 33–44. See the commentary on the text: Al-Ṣāwī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. *Ḥāshiyat al-Ṣāwī 'alā Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*. 6 vols. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām Shāhīn. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2000. Musa, Sulaiman. 'The Influence of *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* on Some Notable Nigerian *Mufasssirūn* in the twentieth-century Nigeria'. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* (2000:20.2), pp. 323–328.
- 314 Jane Dammen McAuliffe. 'Assessing the *Isrā'īliyyāt*: an Exegetical Conundrum.' *Story-telling in the Framework of Non-fictional Arabic Literature*. Edited by Stefan Leder. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998, pp. 345–369.
- 315 Roberto Tottoli. 'Origin and Use of the Term *Isrā'īliyyāt* in Muslim Literature: *Arabica* (1999:46.2), pp. 193–210.
- 316 Walid A. Saleh. 'A Fifteenth-century Muslim Hebraist: al-Biqā'ī and his Defense of Using the Bible to Interpret the Qur'ān.' *Speculum: a Journal of Medieval Studies* (2008:83.3), pp. 629–654. Cf. his reference to the work of Eric Ormsby. *Theodicy in Islamic Thought: the Dispute over al-Ghazālī's Best of all Possible Worlds*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- 317 Andrew Rippin. 'The Designation of "Foreign" Languages in the Exegesis of the Qur'ān.' In *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. Pp. 437–443.
- 318 Andrew Rippin. 'The Function of "*Asbāb al-nuzūl*" in Qur'ānic Exegesis.' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1988:51.1), pp. 1–20.
- 319 David Powers. 'The Exegetical Genre *nāsikh al-Qur'ān wa-mansūkhuhu*'. In *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*. Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 117–138. The relevance of the early text attributed to al-Zuhri has already been discussed above in the context of early literary texts. Christopher Melchert. 'Qur'ānic Abrogation Across the Ninth Century: Shafi'ī, Abū 'Ubayd, Muḥāsibī, and Ibn Qutaybah.' *Studies in Islamic Legal Theory*. Edited by Bernard G. Weiss. *Studies in Islamic law and Society*, 15. Leiden: Brill, 2002, pp. 75–98.
- 320 Suleiman Ali Mourad. 'The Revealed Text and the Intended Subtext: Notes on the Hermeneutics of the Qur'ān in Mu'tazila Discourse as Reflected in the *Tahdhīb* of al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101)'. In *Islamic Philosophy, Science, Culture, and Religion: Studies in Honor of Dimitri Gutas*. Eds. Felicitas Opwis & David Reisman. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2012. Pp. 367–395. See also Fudge, *The Craft*, pp. 127–135.
- 321 Jane Dammen McAuliffe. 'Ibn Taymiyya's *Muqaddimatun fī ulūm al-Qur'ān*.' In *Windows on the House of Islam: Muslim Sources on Spirituality and Religious Life*. Edited by John Renard. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 35–43. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Ibn al-Jawzī's Exegetical Propaedeutic: Introduction and Translation of the (*muqaddimah* to *Zād al-masār fī 'ilm al-tafsīr*) Alif, *Journal of Comparative Poetics*, 1988, 8, 101–13.

- 322 Yusuf. Rahman. 'Hermeneutics of al-Bayḍāwī in his *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta'wīl*.' *Islamic Culture* (1997:71.1), pp. 1–14. David S. Margoliouth. *Chrestomathia Baidawiana: The Commentary of El-Baiḍāwī on Sura 3*. London: Luzac, 1894. See Alfred Beeston. *Baiḍawī's Commentary on Sūrah 12 of the Qur'ān: Text, Accompanied by an Interpretative Rendering and Notes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963. Andrew Rippin points out that H. L. Fleischer's edition of al-Bayḍāwī's *Anwār al-tanzīl* was published between the years of 1846 and 1848, being the 'first complete text of a *tafsīr* to appear in a printed scholarly edition.' Andrew Rippin, *The Qur'ān: Formative Interpretation*, p. xi. Ibrahim Lutpi. 'Al-Baiḍāwī's Life and Works.' *Islamic Studies* (1979:18), pp. 311–21.
- 323 Yeshayahu Goldfeld, 'Development of Theory on Qur'ānic Exegesis in Islamic Scholarship.' *Studia Islamica* (1988:67), 5–27. And Yeshayahu Goldfeld. 'The Illiterate Prophet (*nabī ummī*): an Inquiry into the Development of a Dogma in Islamic Tradition.' *Der Islam* (1980:57.2), pp. 58–67. See Versteegh *Arabic Grammar*, for his discussion of Goldfeld's findings, p. 104 f; and Muḥammad 'Ata al-Sid. The Hermeneutical Problem of the Qur'ān in Islamic History. Temple University PhD, 1975, Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
- 324 Yeshayahu. Goldfeld. 'The *Tafsīr* of 'Abdallah b. 'Abbās' *Der Islam* (1981:58), pp. 125–35, p. 126.
- 325 Gregor Schwarb. 'Capturing the Meanings of God's Speech – The relevance of *uṣūl al-fiqh* to an Understanding of *uṣūl al-tafsīr* in Jewish and Muslim *kalām*.' In *A Word Fitly Spoken. Studies in Mediaeval Exegesis of the Hebrew Bible and the Qur'ān presented to Haggai Ben-Shammai*. Edited by M. M. Bar-Asher, B. Chiesa, S. Hopkins, and S. Stroumsa, Jerusalem 2007, pp. 111–156. Cf. David R. Vishanoff. *The Formation of Islamic Hermeneutics*. American Oriental Series. American Oriental Society, 2011.
- 326 Peter Heath. 'Creative Hermeneutics: A Comparative Analysis of Three Islamic Approaches.' *Arabica*, 36 (1989:36), pp. 173–210.
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INTRODUCTION

Mustansir Mir. '*Fa-qad ṣaḡhat qulūbukumā*: the Interpretation of Qur'ān 66:4 by Farāhī and Iṣlāhī.' *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* (1999:1.1), pp. 141–153. al-'Imādī (Khoja Čelebi). Abū'l-Su'ūd Muḥammad b. Muḥammad. *Irshād al-'aql al-salīm ilā mazāyā al-Qur'ān al-karīm aw Tafsīr Abī'l-Su'ūd*. Edited by 'Abd al-Laṭīf 'Abd al-Raḥmān. 6 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1999. One also needs to bear in mind the efforts to translate and augment the classical scholarship of *tafsīr* in India, Pakistan, South East Asia, Turkey, and other regions of the Islamic world; the attendant scholarship this all inspired is staggering. Modern commentaries which built upon and refined the epistemological structures, discourses, methodologies, and frameworks inherited from pre-modern *tafsīr* scholarship include the hugely influential *tafsīr* by the Tunisian scholar Ibn 'Ashūr. See the seminal *tafsīrs* of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Farāhī: *Niḡām al-Qur'ān wa- ta'wīl al-Furqān bi'l-Furqān* and his *Mufradāt al-Qur'ān*, which includes a commentary by his student Muḥammad al-Iṣlāhī. Beirut. Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2002. See also the work of the prolific scholar Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Shinqīṭī. *Aḍwā' al-bayān fī ṭiqāḥ al-Qur'ān bi'l-Qur'ān*. 9 vols. Collated under the supervision of Bakr ibn 'Abd Allāh Abū Zayd. Jeddah. Maṭbū'āt al-Mujamma' al-'Ilmī: Dār 'Ālam al-Fawā'id. 2008.

